

**MINUTES OF PONTYPOOL COMMUNITY COUNCIL**  
**VIRTUAL FULL COUNCIL MEETING**  
**WEDNESDAY 24<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2020**

**In attendance:**

Councillor: Mrs G. E. James (In the Chair)

Councillors in attendance: Mrs E. Chilcott JP, Miss L. Clarkson, G. Davies, Mrs E. Hunt, N. Jones, J. Killick, R. Mills, R. Overton, Mrs N. P. Parrish, B. Rapier

Officers: Mrs R. Tucker, Ms J. Wright, Mrs C. Challenger, Mrs A. Ambrosen, Mrs R. Cronin

345.	<p>Before the meeting commenced it was unanimously agreed by a vote that Councillor Mrs. G. E. James would chair the meeting and that comments would be made by Councillor J. Killick acting as Leader.</p> <p><b><u>Apologies</u></b></p> <p>Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors Ms K. Arthur, N. Byrne, M. Ford, Mrs J. E. Jones, A. Lang, Mrs R. Matthews, N. Simons, B. Taylor JP and Mrs J. Taylor.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>RESOLVED:</u></b> that the apologies be accepted.</p>	
346.	<p><b><u>Declarations of Interest</u></b></p> <p>Councillors G. Davies, Mrs G. E. James, N. Jones, R. Mills, and Mrs N. P. Parrish declared an interest on any item on the agenda relating to Torfaen County Borough Council.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>RESOLVED:</u></b> that the declarations of interest be recorded.</p>	<b>JW</b>
347.	<p><b><u>Annual Meeting</u></b></p> <p>The Council agreed that due to unprecedented circumstances in respect of Covid 19 that the Annual meeting takes place later in the year but notes it needs to take place before 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020 in accordance with Regulations issued by Senedd Cymru.</p>	

It was further agreed that all positions on the Council and Committees including representatives on outside bodies be rolled over for 2020/2021 and that the meeting dates for 2020/2021 be approved subject to them being reviewed monthly in line with Senedd Advice on Covid 19. It was unanimously agreed that the next Full Council meeting to be held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> July would again be a virtual meeting

**RESOLVED:**

(i) that the Council approve the sanctions in relation to the Annual meeting, committee representation and meeting dates as outlined above.

**JW**

(ii) to note that that the next full Council meeting on the 22<sup>nd</sup> July will again be virtual.

**JW/AA**

**Full Council**

348.

The Council received the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2020.

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on the 20<sup>th</sup> February be confirmed as a true record.

349.

**Policy & Finance**

The Council received the minutes of the Policy & Finance meeting held on the 4<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee meeting held 4<sup>th</sup> March be approved as a true record.

350.

**Accounts**

The Council was informed that the accounts of the Council for 2019/2020 would be placed as an item on the July Council meeting for approval.

**RESOLVED:** that the information be noted by members in relation to the Council accounts.

**LM**

**[Footnote: Please note that the Council Accounts will now not be ready in time for the July Council meeting as the internal Auditor has not completed his work. Therefore, a Special Council meeting will be called on the 12<sup>th</sup> August]**

351. **Receipts & Payments**

The Committee received the schedule of Receipts and Payments for January 2020.

**RESOLVED:** that the schedule of Receipts & Payments for January 2020 be approved.

352. **Credit Card Payments**

The Council approved all credit card payments from the 10<sup>th</sup> December 2019 to the 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2020 (attached as an appendix to the minutes).

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

**CC**

353. **Plenary Powers**

Members received planning observations made in conjunction with the Clerk.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the Plenary Power observations be noted.

**AA**

354. **Planning Determinations**

Members received and noted Torfaen County Borough Council planning determinations including reasons for approvals or refusals.

**RESOLVED:** that the planning determinations be noted.

**AA**

355. **Planning Applications**

Members received and considered Torfaen County Borough Council Planning Applications. Councillor G.

Davies said he fully supported and welcomed planning application number 20/P0313 in his ward as this application would only enhance the environment.

In respect of planning application number 20/P/0308 Councillor N. Jones informed the meeting that this had previously been declined by Torfaen (original planning application 19/P/0688) however revised conditions were requested and he wanted to know whether these had been followed up.

**RESOLVED:** that observations as attached to the minutes be submitted to Torfaen County Borough Council.

**AA**

356. **Co-option**

The Council received a report in respect of co-option from the Clerk which explained that when the sitting member resigned his seat for New Inn Upper, the casual vacancy was advertised, as no-one put their name forward during the 14 day notice period, the Council must co-opt a person to the vacant seat.

Councillor Mills nominated Mr D. K. James to be co-opted on to the Council and outlined Mr James' change in circumstances to members in relation to his previous resignation from the Council. Members unanimously voted to co-opt Mr D. K. James to the vacant seat in New Inn Upper. The Clerk would inform him officially as well as the elections office at Torfaen County Borough Council

**RESOLVED:** (i) that Mr D. K. James be co-opted to serve as a member of the Council for the New Inn Upper ward  
(ii) that the Clerk would notify the Elections office at Torfaen County Borough Council accordingly

**RT/  
JW**

357. **Events**

The Council received a report on cancelled events, those still taking place and those in abeyance. The Chair of the Events Committee informed the meeting that

although it was very sad that these events could not go ahead the Poetry Competition and the Photography competition would still be taking place remotely. To date 15 entries had been received in respect of the poetry competition and 16 entries in relation to the photography competition with the closing date scheduled for the 8<sup>th</sup> July. It was unanimously agreed by members that the closing date be extended until schools broke up on 20<sup>th</sup> July (the end of term) as the Leader stated this would be an activity for the children who are in school to participate in as there won't be 'proper lessons'.

A member asked if the Environmental Quiz could be done virtually. The Leader stated that although this was a lovely idea this would not be practical as schools are only allowing a third of pupils in one class to attend school. The member further asked that with no major events taking place whether the money saved could be utilised elsewhere. The Finance & Events Manager informed the member that some of this money could be used to help with the Foodbanks instead of taking it out of general reserves. The Chair of Policy & Finance also stated that there was no reason why this money could not be carried forward to next year in order that the Council can increase the budget for bigger events to make them even better.

The Chair of Events said that in respect of the Christmas Cavalcade she and the Finance & Events Manager would make a decision with the Clerk at the end of July/beginning of August in respect of the event taking place, although it is highly likely that the event would have to be cancelled and to this effect she would like to support the renewing of Christmas lights and trees in all wards as in view of the last bleak three months this is something that communities/families will look forward to seeing, this was supported by members with a look at having the Christmas lights up by the 14<sup>th</sup> November.

Councillor Clarkson informed the meeting that there were a few issues that needed addressing in respect of the Christmas tree at the Varteg and to this effect the Clerk informed Cllr Clarkson that she had arranged a site meeting for the following week.

The Council unanimously agreed the figure of £11,922.13 from Festive Lighting excluding VAT for

renewing the Christmas lights for an additional year and £19,709.56 from SEC plus VAT for the erecting the lights and the trees for 2020, total cost £31,631.69 as members felt this would be something that the public would look forward to

**RESOLVED:**

(i) that the information as outlined in the Events report be noted and that the deadline for the Poet of Pontypool and Photography competitions be extended until the end of August.

(ii) that the total cost of £31,631.69 be approved in respect of renewing the Christmas lights and erecting the lights and trees for 2020 as outlined above.

**CC/  
AA  
RC**

**CC/  
LM**

358. **IT & Telephony System**

The Council received a comprehensive report produced by the Finance & Events Manager on the new hardware and software that has been installed by Orbits IT (approved by February Full Council) as SRS who the Council were previously with had informed the Council they could no longer provide support for IT and telephony services. A member asked how the staff had found the transition and the training.

The Finance & Events Manager informed the meeting that the whole process from beginning to end with regards to the service provided by Orbits IT has been exceptional and SRS and 123 Telecom had been very helpful and to hand at all time. It was all completed within two weeks with no issues at all and the training in respect of Office 365 which included word, outlook, excel and teams had been exceptional, this was echoed by the Assistant Clerk. Two docking stations were purchased initially but it would be easier if all staff were to have one, to this effect the Chair of Establishment proposed that a further 5 docking stations be purchased at a cost of £150.00 each, this was unanimously agreed by members.

The Finance & Events Manager informed the meeting that the free support from Orbits IT will come to an end this month and the Council could either opt for a fixed annual contract or a pay as you go contract, she explained that as this is a new system it would be very

hard to ascertain the level of support required, therefore she recommended that the Council opts for the pay as you go contract which could be cancelled or changed at any time. Members unanimously agreed the pay as you go contract.

**RESOLVED:**

(i) that the information in relation to the new IT system be noted

(ii) that an additional 5 docking stations be purchased at a cost of £150.00 each.

(iii) that the Council approve the pay as you go contract at a cost of £440.00 to cover 7.5 hours.

(iv) that any additional requirements be brought to the next Council meeting for approval

**CC**

359. **Local Voluntary Funding**

(i) The Council unanimously and retrospectively approved the release of £500.00 from each Councillor's 2019/2020 LVF pot to help with the Foodbanks in Pontypool under s2 of the Local Government Act 2000 under the Power of Well-being.

**CC/  
LM/**

(ii) It was agreed that any member who required the money to be vired back to his/her LVF pot could request this from the Clerk accordingly and the money would be made available from the General Fund.

**RT**

(iii) It was unanimously agreed by Council that a payment of £10,000 from the 2020/2021 General Reserves be awarded to the Foodbanks in Pontypool.

**CC/  
LM**

Local Voluntary Funding was confirmed as follows and all applications have been vetted by the Finance & Events Manager. In respect of the cheque for Garnsychan Partnership the ward member asked that it be posted direct to Garnsychan Millennium Hall.

**Cllr Mrs G. E. James**

Plas-y-Garn Residential Home – £200.00

All Creatures Great and Small – £500.00

Torfaen Museum - £250.00  
s.145LGA 1972/Power of Well Being s2 LGA 2000

**Cllr G. Davies**

Garnsychan Partnership - £500.00  
Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976,  
s.19

Abersychan Ward Scarecrow Competition - £50.00  
s.137 Local Government Act 1972/LGA 2000

**Cllr N. Byrne**

Abersychan Ward Scarecrow Competition - £50.00  
s.137 Local Government Act 1972/LGA 2000

**Cllr Ms K. Arthur**

Abersychan Ward Scarecrow Competition - £50.00  
s.137 Local Government Act 1972/LGA 2000

**Cllr Miss L. Clarkson**

Abersychan Ward Scarecrow Competition - £50.00  
s.137 Local Government Act 1972/LGA 2000

**RESOLVED:** (i) that the local voluntary  
funding as outlined above be approved.

(ii) that the release of  
£500.00 from each Councillor's LVF pot in  
2019/2020, to be donated to the  
Foodbanks in Pontypool, be approved.

(iii) that the virement of  
£500.00 from the Reserve fund be put into  
each members' LVF pot unless the  
Finance & Events Manage is informed  
otherwise.

(iv) that a payment of  
£10,000 from the 2020/2021 General  
Fund be awarded to the foodbanks in  
Pontypool.

**CC**

**CC/  
LM**

**CC/  
LM**

**CC**

360.

**Torfaen Playschemes**

The Council received a report on Torfaen playschemes  
and approved the recommendations therein.

The Deputy Leader informed the meeting that due to the  
current Covid19 situation Torfaen had been unable to  
provide its normal summer programme, however over  
the last 10 weeks they have had incredible volunteer

playworkers who have been working in hubs while schools have been closed and this will continue over the summer. To this effect he proposed that a letter of thanks be sent by the Community Council to Mr Davenne from the Community Council in recognition of all playworkers hard work and that a copy of that letter be distributed to all those playworkers who have given up their time voluntarily under such extreme circumstances. This was agreed unanimously.

A member felt that they should be given an additional token of appreciation, to this effect it was agreed that the Clerk contact Mr Davenne to enquire what he suggests, and would report back to the next Council meeting.

**RESOLVED:**

(i) that the Council approve the sum of £29,000 towards Torfaen's playschemes in 2020 and an additional £2,500 towards the activity sets.

(ii) that the Council approve working in partnership in relation to the box of art resources for children and these be delivered to the Community Council buildings with families given allocated time slots in liaison with Mr Davenne with a staff rota being drawn up to allocate these boxes.

(iii) that the Council consider as outlined an art competition for children to engage in over the summer and the Events Officers implement this in liaison with Mr Davenne and the Finance & Events Manager and Chair and Vice-Chair of Events.

(iv) that a letter of thanks be sent to Mr Davenne and the playworkers as outlined above and that the Clerk ask Mr Davenne for any suggestions in respect of a token of thanks for them.

**CC/LM**

**Staff**

**Chair &  
Vice of  
Events  
CC/AA/  
RC**

**JW/RT**

361. **Cheque Signatories**

It was agreed by Council that that the current cheque signatories continue for 2020-2021 – Councillors Mrs G. James, J. Killick, Mrs R. Matthews and Mrs N. P. Parrish.

362.	<p><b>RESOLVED:</b> that the above members be authorised to sign cheques on behalf of the Council for 2020-2021.</p>	CC
363.	<p><b><u>Official Signatories</u></b></p> <p>It was agreed by Council that the following members be authorised to sign official documents on behalf of the Council until the next Annual meeting, namely the Chair and Vice-Chair of Council and Leader, Councillors Mrs R. Matthews, Ms. K. Arthur and Mrs G. E. James respectively.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> that the above Members be approved and authorised to sign official documents on behalf of the Council:</p> <p><b><u>Section 2/Local Government Act 2000 and s.137 LGA 1972</u></b></p> <p>The Council agreed to resolve to make payments under the Power of Well Being (Local Government Act 2000) and s.137 Local Government Act 1972 in accordance with the guidance issued from Senedd Cymru.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> that Pontypool Community Council makes payments under the Power of Well Being (Local Government Act 2000) and s137 Local Gov Act 1972 as outlined and note the limit for 2020/21 is £8.42 per elector.</p>	RT/ CC/JW
364.	<p><b><u>Payments of Special Allowances/Members Allowances</u></b></p> <p>The Council was asked to determine which members should receive the allowance of £500 for specific responsibilities (minimum of 1 and maximum of 5) as per Determination 46 of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales's report of 2019/2020.</p> <p>The Council agreed to award the same members as the previous year to receive the allowance: Chair and Vice-Chair of Council, Leader and Deputy Leader.</p>	All staff

Secondly, the Council agreed the payment of £150.00 in expenses to be paid to all members unless they had opted out in which case they needed to inform the Clerk.

Thirdly it was agreed to approve all other Determinations relating to payments and allowances to Community and Town Councillors (as previously agreed when the Council adopted the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales).

**RESOLVED:**

(i) that the following 4 positions be awarded the allowance of £500 for specific responsibilities as per Determination 46 of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales's report of 2019: Chair and Vice-Chair of Council, Leader and Deputy Leader.

(ii) that the amount of the civic allowance to be awarded to the Chair and Vice Chair of Council as per Determinations 49 and 50

be agreed at a later date

(ii) that the payment of £150.00 in expenses be paid to all members unless they opt out.

(iii) all other determinations relating to payments and allowances be approved in relation to IRPW.

CC/LM

CC/LM

CC/LM  
RT

CC/LM

365.

**Exclusion of Press and Public**

**By virtue of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public are excluded from discussions on the following items on the basis that disclosure thereof would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.**

366.

**Establishment Committee**

The Council received the minutes of the Establishment Committee held on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the Establishment committee meeting of 4<sup>th</sup> March 2020 be approved as a true record.

367.

**Training**

The Council considered and approved the recommendations of a comprehensive report on staff training.

**RESOLVED:**

(i) that the Council approves the action of the Clerk and the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Establishment Committee in allowing Mrs L. M to enrol in the Webinar CiLCA course at a cost of £250.00 to the Council, on the understanding that she repays the cost of the course if she leaves the employment of Pontypool Community Council within 2 years of completing the course and that she completes the course during her own time.

(ii) that the Council approves the staff seeking appropriate virtual courses that would be beneficial to the Council in the long term, subject to budget availability.

(iii) the Clerk with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Establishment Committee be given authority to approve the exact details of any future training for staff.

**CC  
LM  
RT**

**Staff**

**RT/  
JK/  
NPP**

Chair