



## **MINUTES OF THE BRIDGEND TOWN COUNCIL FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING**

### **Meeting Details:**

Date: Tuesday 6th July 2021

Time: 10am

Location: Meeting held remotely via video conference under the Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Meetings) (Wales) Regulations 2020

Chairperson: Cllr. D Unwin

Staff: D Jones (Deputy Town Clerk/RFO), H Jenkins (Finance & HR Officer)

### **In attendance:**

Cllr. Steven Bletsoe - PRESENT

Cllr. Michelle Blundell-Humphreys - PRESENT

Cllr. David Unwin - PRESENT

Cllr. Matthew Voisey - PRESENT

Cllr. Alan Wathan - PRESENT

Cllr. Ian Williams - PRESENT

Cllr. Tim Wood - APOLOGIES

### **1. To receive apologies for absence**

Apologies received from Cllr. Tim Wood.

### **2. To receive Declarations of Interests (if any) of Members in respect of business to be transacted**

Cllr. Ian Williams declared an interest in agenda item 13 as a member of the Newbridge Fields Steering Committee.

### **3. To elect a Chair of Finance Committee for 2021/22**

Cllr. Alan Wathan nominated Cllr. David Unwin as Chair of Finance Committee which was seconded by Cllr. Ian Williams

**Resolved: Cllr. David Unwin elected as Chair of Finance Committee for 2021/2022.**

### **4. To elect a Deputy Chair of Finance Committee for 2021/22**

Cllr. Ian Williams nominated Cllr. Alan Wathan as Deputy Chair of Finance Committee which was seconded by Cllr. Michelle Blundell-Humphreys

**Resolved: Cllr. Alan Wathan elected as Deputy Chair of Finance Committee for 2021/2022.**

**5. To confirm and sign minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021**

**Resolved: To approve the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on the 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021.**

**6. To consider matters arising from the Finance Committee meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021**

**Resolved: Committee recorded no matters arising from the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting of the 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021 and were approved as an accurate recording of discussion.**

**7. To confirm Bank Signatories for 2021/22**

The Deputy Clerk informed Committee that the current arrangements for signatories are the Chair of Finance, Deputy Chair of Finance and the Mayor, with The Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk as second signatories and the Finance Officer approved to input payments onto the Bank.

The Deputy Clerk advised further to the appointment of Chair and Deputy Chair of Finance the signatories will be updated.

**Resolved: Committee confirmed bank signatories for 2021/22 and gave the RFO approval to update the bank accordingly.**

**8. To receive update for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 and Audit Arrangements**

**a) Quarter 4 Budget Review for 2020/21**

Committee considered the Quarter 4 budget review and noted that the sub budget number of 1480/1 should be removed. The Deputy Clerk informed Committee that this item was brought forward from a previous financial year but would not appear on the 2021/22 budget review.

Committee wished to thank the Deputy Clerk for all the hard work undertaken.

**Resolved: Committee approved the Quarter 4 Budget Review for 2020/21.**

**b) Bank Reconciliation as at 31 March 2021**

The Deputy Clerk informed Committee that the bank reconciliation had been sent to the internal auditor and would also be submitted to the external audit; she explained that the document was presented to Committee for their information.

**Resolved: Committee approved the bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2021.**

**c) General Reserves as at 31 March 2021**

The Deputy Clerk presented a paper to Committee on general reserves as at 31 March 2021 and earmarked budget for 2021/22. She drew Committees attention to earmarked budget for outstanding building works for Carnegie House to remedy the damp and window repair along with works required for the additional premises. Committee discussed the items earmarked and agreed and approved the additional earmarks.

**Resolved: Committee approved the General Reserves calculation for the year ended 31 March 2021 and earmarked budget for 2021/22.**

**d) Audit Arrangements 2020/21**

The Deputy Clerk reiterated to Committee that the internal auditor reported no issues arising from his review and that Council had signed the Annual Return form prior to 30<sup>th</sup> June as required. She advised that work is being carried out by the Clerk and Deputy Clerk on documents for submission to the external auditor which will include bank reconciliation, explanation of significant variances, a record of PAYE payments and contracts for the Clerk and Deputy Clerk as well as Bridgend Town Councils report on how it is contributing to the wellbeing and bio diversity of its area. The Deputy Clerk advised that the documents would be submitted to the External Auditor as soon as possible and a notice for public to view the accounts will be published as required.

**9. To receive Quarter 1 Budget Review for 2021/22**

The Deputy Clerk noted to Committee that the budget 1460: Town Litter Bins were the only area slightly over budget due to the recent purchase of 8 dog bins. Committee agreed that income from Newcastle Higher Community Council for the emptying of dog bins within their wards would offset against this figure which could be vired at the end of the financial year.

Cllr. Matthew Voisey asked that an agenda item to discuss Christmas lighting provision for 2021 be added to the next Finance Committee meeting.

Cllr. Matthew Voisey requested an update on the recruitment progress of the four outstanding roles as noted against staff costs. Cllr. Alan Wathan as Chair of Personnel Committee responded:

- That the recruitment of the Town Hall Front of House role will be delayed until the Town Hall building works are complete, scheduled for spring 2022.
- That the Carnegie House Front of House role will be recruited when Carnegie House is once again open to the public in line with COVID-19 guidelines.
- That further to a recent discussion with the Chair of Personnel, the Mayor and Town Clerk the role of Senior Finance and HR Officer will be brought to the next meeting of Full Council for

discussion of the post being split into two separate roles, one specialising in Finance and one in HR with the recruitment of the HR post being a high priority.

The Chair of personnel asked the Deputy Clerk to inform Committee of her view; she responded that the current finance arrangements were working well and personally felt that there was not a need for a Senior Finance Officer and that the budget would be better utilised in areas that were not resourced or for the completion of projects such as the setting up of a Heritage Space at Carnegie House on a fixed term contract. The Deputy Clerk stated that this was however a matter for Council to decide at a future meeting.

**Resolved:**

- 1) To approve the Quarter 1 Budget Review for 2021/22.**
- 2) That Christmas lighting costs for 2021 be added to the next Finance Committee meeting agenda for discussion.**

**10. To consider the provision of skips at Jubilee Road Allotment Site**

The Deputy Clerk informed Committee of a call received from the site representative informing the Clerk that a large amount of allotment rubbish had built up at the site and asked if Council would consider the provision of two skips so that it can be cleared.

The Deputy Clerk along with the Facilities Manager investigated the options for the removal of the waste and asked Committee for their view on providing skip(s) or to request the removal of the rubbish from a waste carrier due to the volume of waste at the site.

Outlined costs for consideration (excluding VAT):

- a) 2 x Midi Skips - £280.66
- b) 1 Builder Skip - £198.00
- c) 1 Builder Skip and 1 Midi Skip - £338.33
- d) 2 Builder Skips - £396.00
- e) Quote from Waste Carrier (2 van loads) £360 - £480.00

Further to discussion by the Committee it was agreed that one builder skip be provided and a further skip follow (if required), and the site representative be informed that the tenants only load the skip with garden and green waste.

**Resolved: Committee approved the provision of a builder skip for the Jubilee Road Allotment site and a further skip to be provided if required.**

## 11. To receive NNDR update for the Town Hall

The Deputy Clerk informed Committee that she will now lead on making enquiries for the revaluation of the NNDR for the Town Hall and has emailed both BCBC and the Valuation Office. She advised further to advice received from the Valuation Office that she has registered for the Check and Challenge Service. The Deputy Clerk gave an overview of the existing valuation compared to that of Carnegie House. She advised that due to the pandemic the Valuation Office have stated that there may be delays and that she will report progress back to the Committee.

## 12. Review of Governance Documents

### a) Financial Regulations

The Committee agreed the following amendments:

Page 3 – Review date.

**Resolved: Amendment to *These Financial Regulations were adopted by the Council at its meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2021.***

Page 7 – Section 3 – Item 3.1 – Review wording of *Allotments Committee and Carnegie House Board shall review its three-year forecast of revenue and capital receipts and payments.*

**Resolved: Item 3.1 and 3.3 to be reviewed by the RFO and amended where applicable.**

Page 8 – 3.6

**Resolved: Figures to be increased from £500 to £1,000**

Page 8 – 4.4

**Resolved: Committee approved the rewording to reflect the weekly authorisation process of invoices and payments for approval.**

Page 11 – 5.6

**Resolved: Committee approved the rewording to reflect the process of signing cheques.**

**Resolved: That the Financial Regulations document be amended by the RFO and submitted to the next meeting of Full Council for approval.**

### b) Risk Assessment

Cllr. Steven Bletsoe reported that a working group had been set up to look at the documentation which has yet to finish its review. Cllr. Steven Bletsoe advised that the document would be presented to Full Council for approval when completed.

### c) Statement of Internal Control

The Deputy Clerk highlighted her observations and those of the working group.

**Resolved: Committee approved the amendments to the Statement of Internal Control.**

d) Investment Strategy

The Deputy Clerk highlighted her observations. No further comments or amendments were made and Committee accepted and approved the amendments.

**Resolved: Committee approved the amendments to the Investment Strategy.**

**13. To consider Grant Aid Applications**

a) Application from Bridgend Male Voice Choir

Committee discussed the application and concluded to reject the application as it did not fit the criteria for grant aid.

**Resolved: That the application from Bridgend Male Voice Choir not be approved for grant aid.**

b) Revised Grant Application from Bridgend Athletic Rugby Football Club

Following a debate by Committee Cllr. Matthew Voisey proposed that a donation of £1,000 towards the cost of replacing equipment be awarded in recognition of the work of the Club within the community for the youth of the area; the motion was seconded by Cllr. Ian Williams.

**Resolved: To award a grant aid donation of £1,000 to Bridgend Athletic Club.**

**The Meeting Closed 11:10 am**

Signed..... (Chair of Finance Committee)

Date.....