



MINUTES OF THE BRIDGEND TOWN COUNCIL FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday 4th February 2020, 10am at Carnegie House Board Room

Present:	Cllr. David Unwin – (Chair) Cllr. Roger Marsh Cllr. Matthew Voisey Cllr. Alan Wathan
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In attendance: Mrs L Edwards (Town Clerk), Debra Jones (Deputy Clerk) and Mrs H Jenkins (Finance Officer)

1. To Receive Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and noted from Cllr. Lyn Walters, Cllr. Carolyn Webster and Cllr. Steven Bletsoe

2. Declarations of Interest of Members (if any)

Cllr. Roger Marsh declared an interest in Agenda Item 12 and logged accordingly.

Cllr. Matthew Voisey declared an interest in Agenda Item 13 and logged accordingly.

3. To receive Minutes of the Meeting held on 12th December 2019

Resolved: The minutes of the meeting held on the 12th December 2019 were agreed as a true and accurate recording of discussion, which were duly signed by the Chair of Finance Committee.

4. Matters arising from the Minutes of the Meeting held on 12th December 2019

The Chair requested an update on the outstanding building issues and Committee requested that the Facilities Manager should attend the meeting to give a verbal update on progress made.

BTC Facilities Manager joined the meeting.

Item 1.1 to 1.3 storage space in Cleaners Cupboard – no progress made other than having received the original quotations. The Facilities Manager suggested the Outdoor Worker Team should be trained to use specialist equipment before being able to undertake work needed to improve storage space.

1.4 Board Room Carpet Tile Replacement – No progress to date.

1.5 Windows – The Facilities Manager noted that she had received three quotes to date but no decision had been made as to which supplier should be requested to undertake the work.

1.6 Fire Door Replacement – No progress to date

1.7 Fire Exit Door – Security Grille – No progress to date.

1.8 Landing Door – replacement – No progress to date.

1.9 Fire Security Alarms – The Facilities Manager confirmed this is almost complete and a fire safety policy and procedure had been developed due to commence Friday 7th February 2020.

2.1 Lift Replacement – No progress

6.1 Health and Safety Training – The Facilities Manager informed Committee that some training had been undertaken but no Health & Safety Training packages had been sought for further staff training.

8.3 War Memorial Flag Poles – No progress made – The Committee requested that this issue be given high priority to progress as a matter of urgency.

8.6 Council Van – Decals Corporate Imagery – The Facilities Manager stated that the current imagery is in a TIF and JPEG and is not a compatible format. Cllr. M Voisey requested that the current image be sent to him to look at the re-design of the decal imagery to a more suitable format in order to make progress on this issue.

BTC Facilities Manager left the meeting; after also discussing agenda item 8.

Resolved: Finance Committee requested it be recorded that many items listed within the Finance Minutes of 12th December 2019 had not been progressed further and that this was not acceptable.

Page 5 Item 10 – Additional Premises: The Clerk gave an update to Committee and noted that the District Valuer is due to revalue the property shortly for a revised valuation. A BCBC cabinet meeting on the 25th February had been scheduled and early indications are that BCBC would approve the purchase to Bridgend Town Council. However further progress cannot be made until this decision had been formalised.

The Clerk informed Committee that she had spoken to BCBC in relation to the transfer of the lease of Evergreen Hall back to BCBC and they are currently looking to allow for a longer transitional period whilst work at the new premises is being undertaken.

5. To receive quarterly budget review

The Deputy Clerk (RFO) provided a copy of the Quarterly Budget Review outlining Income, Spend and Balance to Committee for discussion and highlighted the following:

- Insurance costs had increased by £37.23 due to the addition of Crime and Cyber cover and increased Council van requirements.
- Maintenance costs had increased due to the purchase of the Motorised Water Bowser and Outdoor Worker Van with fuel costs also seeing an acceptable increase with landscaping works being brought in-house and the dog bin emptying service provided to Newcastle Higher Community Council.
- It was noted that the petty cash budget had increased slightly due to the growth of projects and maintenance as well as the growth of Arts Centre activities. RFO highlighted that where possible items are purchased using approved suppliers on account. Cllr. M Voisey suggested looking into a procurement card such as Revolut Card UK to make small purchases whereby the card has an amount of money input to it and statements are received to monitor use, thereby cutting down on administration time and handling of cash.
- Christmas Lighting – The Deputy Clerk noted that an outstanding invoice from BCBC was due and she would chase this up in order for payment to be made within this financial year.
- Capital Asset Transfer – The Deputy Clerk informed Committee that a payment of £5,000 is currently waiting to be made to Bridgend Athletic Club further to receipt of their BTC Grant Aid form.

Resolved: That the quarterly budget be approved and duly signed by the Chair of Finance Committee.

6. To consider expenditure forecast to March 31st 2020 and virement of budgets

The Deputy Clerk referred members to the forecast of total income and total expenditure and noted that actual spend would be reported to Committee at the next meeting following year-end. The Deputy Clerk brought the following to the Committee's attention:

- Contingency – A payment of £10,000 is awaited from BCBC towards Asbestos Damage in the basement of Carnegie House.
- Building Works – The Deputy Clerk informed Committee that in light of the progress made by the Facilities Manager it is unlikely to spend the £28,610 left within the building works budget and suggested to transfer any remaining balance to next year's budget. Members Agreed.
- Election Costs – a negative balance was noted as the budget allocation had been for one election however three had been called within this financial year.
- Special Cleansing – The Deputy Clerk informed Committee that income received for dog waste collection would be allocated to this budget. It was also noted that the purchase of a gum-busting machine was deferred.
- Carnegie House Programme – It was highlighted that grant money received would need to be earmarked and an update would be given at the next Finance Committee Meeting.
- Great Western Railway Project – It was reported that budget had been earmarked as agreed during precept setting discussions and placed into the 2020/21 budget. The Chair noted that a decision on this project would be made at a future Planning Meeting and an update would be made at the next Finance Committee Meeting.
- Depedestrianisation – The Chair of Finance noted that the £20,000 currently allocated for depedestrianisation appears that it would not be going ahead, therefore the amount should be placed in general reserves.
- External Premises – The Town Clerk requested Committee's approval for the budget to be earmarked. Members agreed.

7. To consider allotment rent charges 2021/22

The Deputy Clerk provided Committee with a budget spreadsheet detailing income and expenditure for allotments from April 2019 to date. Members were referred to a spreadsheet detailing allotment rent increases from 2010 to 2020. Following a discussion Members agreed the allotment rental for 2021/2022 to be increased by 25 pence per metre squared for each tenant.

Resolved: Committee approved the allotment rent increase for 2021/2022 of 25pence per metre squared.

8. To consider mobile phone provision for facilities staff

The Facilities Manager informed Committee that two of the three Outdoor Maintenance Team currently receive a monthly expenses cost of £10 for the use of their personal phone for work purposes. The Facilities Manager requested approval from Committee for the third Outdoor Maintenance worker to receive the same remuneration.

Resolved: Committee agreed for the three maintenance workers to receive the same reimbursement of £10 per month for use of their personal phones for work purposes.

The Facilities Manager requested Committee to consider if the Facilities Officer would also be able to have the same reimbursement; however following discussion, Committee agreed that the office 'pool' phone be used by the Facilities Officer for work purposes.

Resolved: Committee approved the use of the office mobile phone for the Facilities Officer.

9. To consider payment of annual leave for Arts Project Officer

The Town Clerk informed Committee that following a period of sick leave of the Arts Project Officer last year, a substantial amount of annual leave had been accrued and the staff member had asked if the leave could be paid.

Town Clerk reported that during the sick period, pre-booked leave was taken for a holiday. Advice from ACAS was sought and it was confirmed that if the employee was paid full pay during the pre-booked leave period and the holiday was taken, the annual leave could be deducted.

Town Clerk added that ACAS also advised that a formal agreement was needed to specify that the request for a leave payment was made by the employee and an agreement had been reached by both parties.

The Town Clerk advised that due to workload demands, it would be difficult for the employee to take the time as annual leave as well as taking the new leave allocation for the current year.

The Town Clerk asked Committee for their consideration and approval of the payment of 13 days annual leave totalling £805.35.

Resolved: Committee agreed to pay the Arts Project Officer annual leave at a cost of £805.35 with a formal agreement between BTC and the member of staff.

10. To consider installation of bins at Sunnyside Road, Bridgend

The Chair of Finance gave a brief update to Committee on current BCBC arrangements in which dog bins are provided and emptied by Bridgend Town Council and litter bins are provided and emptied by BCBC. He reported that he had been advised that due to current budget restraints BCBC are no longer supplying and emptying new litter bins. Following a discussion by the Committee, it was agreed to defer this agenda item to the next meeting where Cllr. C Webster would be in attendance to discuss this request.

Resolved: Committee agreed to defer agenda item 10: To consider installation of bins at Sunnyside Road, Bridgend, to the next Finance Meeting.

11. To receive an update on Grant Applications:

(a) Arts Council of Wales – ‘Who is Bridgend?’

The Deputy Clerk informed Committee that Bridgend Town Council had been successful in obtaining a grant from the Arts Council of Wales to facilitate a ‘Who is Bridgend’ project. She reported that funding of £9,800 has been awarded with BTC match funding £2,500 to be earmarked.

The Clerk advised that the project would be run by the Carnegie House Artist in Residence, commencing February to November 2020.

12. To consider Grant Aid Applications:

Cllr. R Marsh: declaration of interest in item 12a recorded.

Chair referred Members to three grant aid applications for review; Committee discussed each application.

(a) Wildmill Youth Club

Resolved: To seek further clarification from Wildmill Youth Club before a decision on funding is made. The Chair of Finance Committee agreed to draft a letter requesting further information.

(b) Cwlwm Celtaidd – Wales Interceltic Music and Dance Festival

The Town Clerk informed Committee that the grant aid was requested to run workshops in primary schools within Bridgend Town Council wards; following a discussion with Committee, grant aid funding was not approved.

Resolved: Not approved.

(c) Prestige Acrobatics and Dance Fundraising

Following a discussion with Committee, grant aid funding was not approved.

Resolved: Not approved.

(d) The West of England MS Therapy Centre

Following a discussion with Committee, grant aid funding was not approved.

Resolved: Not approved.

13. To consider future payment to Evergreen Hall (verbal – RFO)

Cllr. M Voisey: declaration of interest in item 13 recorded.

The Deputy Clerk referred Members to the quarterly grant payments made to Evergreen Hall. She asked Members to review the final payment in light of the possible purchase of additional premises.

Committee discussed the final payment and it was agreed to defer the fourth quarter payment of £2,250 pending further discussion regarding Evergreen Hall current financial situation and proposed relocation costs.

Resolved: Committee agreed to defer the Evergreen Hall fourth quarter payment pending further discussion and receipt of financial accounts.

The Town Clerk proposed that a special meeting regarding Evergreen Hall future relationship with BTC should be convened. She informed Committee of the future options available to Evergreen Hall, either remaining as a charity with the need for constitutional changes; or if the charity were dissolved, remaining balances could be transferred to Bridgend Town Council and ring fenced to be used for Evergreen Hall purposes.

14. To consider partnership tree-planting schemes with BCBC

The Chair of Finance informed Committee that a proposal had been received from BCBC for a tree-planting scheme held in conjunction with The Woodland Charity and Mental Health Matters Wales. The scheme would involve planting trees in Newbridge Fields with implementation to commence in March 2020. The cost for the scheme would be £13,000 with a contribution requested from Bridgend Town Council.

Following a discussion by Committee, it was agreed to approve budget of £3,000 for the Newbridge Fields planting and £2,000 held for planting alongside the A48 retail park area around the Bridgend Resource Centre at a future date. Committee also requested that further funding avenues, such as 'Bags for Life Scheme', should be investigated.

Resolved: Tree-planting funding approval of £3,000 for Newbridge Fields and £2,000 for the A48; additional funding from 'Bags for Life' to be sought.

15. To consider budget for Maltese visit to commemorate HMS Urge

The Town Clerk referred Members to a report detailing the costs for four representatives from Bridgend Town Council to attend the HMS Urge Memorial event being held in Malta. She reported that the event will commemorate HMS Urge as an official war grave. The Town Clerk advised, that the representatives from BTC will need to depart the UK on 25th April 2020 and return on 29th April 2020.

Members discussed subsistence and clarified that subsistence would be paid for the Mayor and Consort.

Cllr. M Voisey discussed the possibility of contacting local MP Jamie Wallace who could officially write to the UK Ambassador in Malta to ask if they could lend any support. The Town Clerk informed Committee

that she is due to speak to the grandson of Lieutenant Commander Thompkinson (HMS Urge) to discuss arrangements before drafting a letter to MP Jamie Wallace.

Resolved: That the Town Clerks report be accepted and actioned as may be appropriate.

16. Correspondence

(a) Email from Secretary of the Bridgend Town Twinning Association – French Student Visit to Bridgend

The Chair of Finance informed Committee of a request from the secretary of the Bridgend Town Twinning Association for a contribution to costs for a buffet held for the French student visit and their host families at the Bridgend Rugby Club in February 2020.

Following a discussion, Committee felt that it would not be appropriate for public funds to be used in this way as a non-cultural event that was not being held at Carnegie House.

Resolved: Bridgend Town Twinning Association - French Student Visit to Bridgend, event contribution not approved.

Meeting Closed: The Meeting Closed at 11.15 am

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

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