



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

### **Meeting Details:**

Date: Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> February 2022

Time: 10:00 am

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. D Unwin

Cllr. S Bletsoe

Cllr. I Williams

Cllr. M Blundell-Humphreys

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

Apologies were received from Cllr A Wathan and Cllr T Wood.

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

Declarations of interest were received from Cllr I Williams as a personal interest on Agenda item 19.2 and Cllr S Bletsoe declared a personal interest on agenda item 10 and a prejudicial interest on agenda item 19.2.

#### **3. To confirm and sign Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2021**

The minutes were confirmed as an accurate recording of discussions made and duly signed by the Chair of Finance Committee.

**4. To consider matters arising from the Finance Committee Meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2021**

There were no matters arising from the Finance Committee meeting held on the 7<sup>th</sup> of December 2021.

**5. To receive 2020/21 Audit update**

The Deputy Clerk informed Committee that she is yet to receive the audit opinion and has sent an email to request when this might be received but no response has been received.

**6. To review and approve Precept Statement for 2022/23**

**RESOLVED: The Finance Committee approved the Precept statement for 2022/23**

**7. To review a formal request from the Community Engagement and Wellbeing Committee to vire funds from the Wartime Bridgend budget to support the HMS Urge Memorial Project.**

The Deputy Clerk noted that as part of due process Committee were asked to consider and make a formal decision on the request from the Community Engagement and Wellbeing Committee to vire funds from the wartime budget to support the HMS Urge memorial project.

Committee noted the request but felt that a final decision would be deferred until the project was formulated and figures were submitted to a future Finance Committee.

**RESOLVED: Committee agreed to defer the request to vire funds from the wartime budget to support the HMS Urge memorial project until figures are submitted to discuss at a future Finance Committee meeting.**

**8. To receive Evergreen Hall Lease Escrow Account update**

The Deputy Clerk informed Committee that the Town Clerk had recently met with the new chair of Evergreen Hall pending confirmation of them formally taking up the role and asked Committee to confirm what information they require in order to release the funds held in the Escrow account.

Committee discussed the issue and felt that assurances would be needed before any release of funds would be made. Committee asked the Deputy Clerk to formally request an internal control document from the new chair of Evergreen before passing it to the Finance Committee for a decision.

**RESOLVED: Committee requested an internal control document to be provided by Evergreen Hall Charity prior to the release of funds from the Evergreen Hall Lease Escrow account.**

## **9. Budgets**

### **a) To receive Remembrance 2021 Budget Review**

**RESOLVED: Committee noted the Remembrance 2021 budget review and commented on the success of the Remembrance event of 2021 which had not required the additional costs of road closures having contained the event within the Town Centre.**

### **b) To receive 2017-2022 Translation Costs Budget Review**

**RESOLVED: Committee noted the translation costs presented over the past five years.**

### **c) To receive 2018-2022 Remuneration Budget Review**

**RESOLVED: Committee noted the remuneration costs from 2018 to date giving an overview of spend in the last four years and noted that further remuneration payments would be made in February 2022.**

### **d) To receive 2021/22 Quarter 4 Budget Review**

The Deputy Clerk informed Committee that the 2021/22 quarter 4 budget review would be the last to be received in this financial year and the actual year end would be provided at the next Finance Committee in April 2022.

Committee thanked the Deputy Clerk for all the work in completing the budget review.

**RESOLVED: Committee accepted the quarter 4 budget review and approved the Deputy Clerk to vire as appropriate when preparing the year end budget review to be reported to the Finance Committee in April 2022.**

### **e) To receive 2021/22 Allotment Budget Review**

**RESOLVED: Committee accepted the 2021/22 statement of the Allotment budget review.**

## **10. To discuss waste clearance at Great Western Avenue Allotments**

The Deputy Clerk informed Committee that the Facilities Officer had received communication from a new tenant at Great Western Avenue allotments that they were unable to cultivate their plot due to a large amount of green waste covering the site.

The Deputy Clerk asked Committee to consider the option of appointing a contractor to remove the waste or to provide a skip, both with the comparable cost of around £300.

**RESOLVED: Committee considered both options and agreed for the appointment of a contractor to remove the waste from the Great Western Avenue allotment site.**

Cllr S Bletsoe noted that he had visited the Great Western Allotment site on a Saturday morning and stated that the gate was open and unlocked and felt that the gate should be locked and always secured.

The Deputy Clerk stated that the Facilities Team were researching the possibility of installing an electrical lock and keypad, however there was no electrical connection at the entrance to the site; she explained that the security of the Great Western Avenue Allotment site will be placed on the Facilities Committee agenda for discussion.

Committee went on to discuss the fencing situation at Great Western Avenue and Cllr S Bletsoe left the meeting after declaring a declaration of interest.

Committee discussed the issue of fencing which was in a state of collapse. At a meeting of the Facilities Committee, it had been resolved to obtain quotes with costs being shared equally with the Bridgend Town Council and the resident backing onto the allotment site. It was noted that one quote had been received however at the Facilities Committee meeting on the 27<sup>th</sup> of January 2022 further quotes were requested which had resulted in a quote being received by Accurate Fencing.

Committee were asked to consider the quotes to take this issue forward.

Committee noted that both quotes provided failed to provide their formal address and the Deputy Clerk wished to note that as part of the Bridgend Town Council's financial control that a formal address with account details should be provided for payment to be made on satisfactory work completed with an invoice being addressed to the Town Council for payment to be made via BACS or cheque.

**RESOLVED: Committee having considered the quotes obtained approved to recommend to Full Town Council on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2022 that Accurate Fencing be contacted to undertake the work at the Great Western Road Allotment site.**

Cllr S Bletsoe returned to the meeting after Committee had made their decision.

## **11. To review and approve Allotment Rent for 2023/24**

The Deputy Clerk presented a paper to Committee for their consideration on the allotment rental increase for 2023/24 as a requirement to give twelve months' notice to allotment

tenants. Committee considered the options and the percentage increase and noted that a 50 pence per metre squared increase for 2023/24 was not unreasonable and was moderate in comparison with other allotment sites.

**RESOLVED: Committee approved the rental increase of 50 pence per 25meter squared for the allotment rental for 2023/2024**

## **12. To review quotes and approve supplier for the provision of electricity to Carnegie House and Town Hall**

The Deputy Clerk informed Committee that the Facilities Officer is currently gathering information and compiling a spreadsheet on the provision of utilities to Carnegie House and the Town Hall, however any quotes obtained are only valid for a twenty-four-hour period. The Deputy Clerk suggested to Committee that Members attend a working group which would be convened on Tuesday the 8<sup>th</sup> of March 2022 to look at costs and variables such as the contract length, payment by direct debit, green energy, and usage. The information on a recommended utility supplier would then be brought before an Extra Ordinary Finance Committee meeting on the same day, following the working group for a resolution on which supplier and contract to award which can be progressed on the same day.

Committee discussed the need for a review of the energy efficiency of both Carnegie House and the Town Hall and requested that the Deputy Clerk investigate the BCBC heat scheme and update Committee at a future meeting.

**RESOLVED: Committee agreed to a working group being set up on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2022 at 11 am and an Extra Ordinary Finance Committee meeting scheduled thereafter to consider and make an informed decision on utility suppliers for Carnegie House and the Town Hall.**

## **13. Summer Planting**

### **1. To receive Summer Planting/Floral Displays update (Chair)**

The Deputy Clerk noted to Committee that Plantscape who had previously supplied hanging baskets and tiered flower towers in the past had advised Bridgend Town Council that they were no longer able to provide quotes for summer planting for 2022.

The Facilities Manager had contacted eight companies but only three had responded with Plantscape and Awen being unable to provide a quote. Boverton Nurseries were the only company able to provide a quote to the Town Council currently with limited supply.

The Chair of Committee commented that he found the situation with Plantscape not being able to supply a quote as unusual as they are the leading supplier in this area and are still advertising for providing planting and floral displays.

The Deputy Clerk noted that the Town Clerk had sent an email to Plantscape but had received no response.

The Chair of Committee asked for further efforts to be made to speak directly to the company to ascertain why they are unable to provide a quote to the Town Council.

**RESOLVED: Committee requested for Plantscape to be contacted to obtain a reason why they are unable to supply a quote.**

**2. To discuss Summer Planting/Floral Displays options for 2022**

Committee considered the summer planting and floral displays for 2022 and asked for further work and information to be presented to the next Facilities Committee meeting in March.

**RESOLVED: Committee agreed for further facts to be gathered for the summer planting floral displays for 2022 and presented to the next Facilities Committee meeting or if possible, at the Extra Ordinary Finance Committee meeting on the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2022**

**14. To consider “Veggie Planters” School Project (Chair)**

The Chair of Committee presented a paper to Committee for their approval on the provision of ‘Veggie Planters’ to four schools to aid with their eco projects.

**RESOLVED: Committee considered the paper and approved the provision of the veggie planters.**

**15. To review and consider Battle of Britain booking form and invoice for Wartime Bridgend 2022**

The Deputy Clerk noted to Committee that an invoice and booking form had been provided for the Wartime Bridgend event 2022. To secure the booking a deposit of 50% (£5,022) was required and Committee were asked for their approval of the deposit to be made.

Committee considered the possible risks of any loss of deposit should any unforeseen event take place and requested looking into temporary insurance cover to be considered.

**ACTION: The Deputy Clerk to contact insurance providers to seek cover for the loss of monies if the event were to be cancelled and the Community Engagement & Events Manager contact the Company that provided the invoice and booking form to seek further clarity on the situation.**

## **16. Review of Governance Documents**

### **a) Risk Assessment**

The Chair of Committee requested that a further discussion is needed with the Mayor and Deputy Clerk before approval and suggested to defer the review of the Risk Assessment until further discussion is made, this item would be brought to a future Finance Committee meeting.

The Deputy Clerk noted that she would need to report to Audit that the Risk Assessment had not been approved but would be referred and reviewed later.

**RESOLVED: Committee agreed to defer the approval of the risk assessment pending further clarification.**

### **b) Internal Control Statement**

Committee discussed the statement of internal control and noted the omission of the Facilities Committee on page 2/3, this would be included and updated.

**RESOLVED: Committee approved the Internal Control Statement which would be updated and signed.**

## **17. Town and Community Grant Fund**

### **1. To review the current status of Town and Community Grant Fund 2021/22**

Chair referred to the status of the Town and Community Grant Funding and wished for BCBC to be contacted to seek if they would be prepared to carry over the grant awarded to 2022/23 or if BTC would need to reapply in totality.

The Deputy Clerk highlighted that during Precept setting discussions Council had agreed that Town Hall internal works would be carried out in 2022/23 and pedestrian access and community rooms thereafter; she added that Council did not budget £21,000 match funding. Cllr S Bletsoe stated that contingency funds could be used.

The Deputy Clerk reported that the Town Clerk had contacted BCBC but had not received a response and advised Committee that if the forms must be re-submitted this would have a big impact on her current workload due to the grant application deadline.

**2. To consider application for Town and Community Grant Fund 2022/23**

The Deputy Clerk informed Committee that revised quotes would be required for the Community flooring project and pedestrian access at the Town Hall.

Committee discussed the issue of projects being unable to proceed due to issues out of the Council's control but felt that there was a need to continue with the application of the Grant fund to carry projects forward.

**18. To discuss Great Western Railway Grant**

**RESOLVED: Committee approval was made to return the funds back to the Great Western Railway as the project would not be going ahead and approved the Deputy Clerk to progress this issue and arrange for the release of the funds.**

**19. To consider Grant Aid Applications**

**1. To consider application from Wales Air Ambulance**

**RESOLVED: Committee agreed to award a grant aid donation of £500 to the Wales Air Ambulance.**

**2. To consider application from Project Linus UK**

Cllr S Bletsoe declared an interest and left the meeting whilst a discussion took place. Committee discussed the application and agreed that a donation of £500 was reasonable pending further documentation on financial status and constitution were met.

**RESOLVED: Committee approved a grant aid donation of £500 to Project Linus UK pending further documentation.**

Cllr. S Bletsoe returned to the meeting after the decision was made.

**3. To consider application from Urdd Cymru**

**RESOLVED: Committee considered the application from Urdd Cymru and declined to offer a grant aid donation.**

**20. Correspondence**

**1. Email from Lions Club Bridgend: Christmas 2021 Donation**

The Deputy Clerk informed Committee that correspondence had been received by the Community Engagement Manager and a Grant Aid application and policy

documentation had been sent to the Lions Club Bridgend, but a completed application has not been returned to date.

Committee noted that in the past a donation had been made following the provision of the Christmas grotto at Carnegie House, as this event did not take place this year

Committee agreed that a donation of £500 could not be made.

Committee agreed that should a completed grant aid application be submitted then it would be brought to a future Finance Committee for consideration.

**RESOLVED: Committee declined the donation of £500 to the Lions Club Bridgend for Christmas 2021 but would consider a grant aid application should one be submitted.**

**The Meeting Closed: 11.50 am**

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

Date.....