



## MINUTES OF THE BRIDGEND TOWN COUNCIL FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020, 10am held remotely via video conference

<b>Present:</b>	Cllr. David Unwin – (Chair) Cllr. Lyn Walters Cllr. Steven Bletsoe Cllr. Matthew Voisey Cllr. Alan Wathan Cllr. Carolyn Webster
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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 received from Cllr. Tim Wood

### 2. Declarations of Interest of Members

Cllr. S Bletsoe and Cllr. C Webster declared an interest as Cllr S. Bletsoe is chair of the Regeneration Committee (Agenda Item 22) and Cllr C. Webster sits on the Community Engagement and Wellbeing Committee.

### 3. To receive minutes of the meeting held 19th June 2020

The minutes agreed as true and accurate recording of discussion and signed by the Chair of Finance Committee.

### 4. Matters arising from the meeting held on 19th June 2020

No matters arising.

### 5. To receive minutes of the meeting held on 6th October 2020

The minutes agreed as true and accurate recording of discussion and signed by the Chair of Finance Committee.

## **6. Matters arising from the meeting held on 6th October 2020**

Page 4 – Update on the refund of Malta flights, the Town Clerk informed Committee that a voucher was received and a request to revert the voucher into a full refund had been submitted, however there is currently a delay in the processing of the refund.

Amendment: Item 3 – To receive the minutes of the 19<sup>th</sup> June 2020 and not 4<sup>th</sup> February 2020

## **7. To receive an Audit update for the year ended 31st March 2020**

The Deputy Clerk (RFO) informed Committee that she had responded to the external auditor on two questions that were raised against the audit submission, the status is 'passed to review', and a decision is currently awaiting from them.

## **8. To note for information appointment of temporary Facilities Allotment Officer**

The Town Clerk informed Committee that the temporary Facilities Allotment Officer had taken up post on the 30<sup>th</sup> November and will be taken around the allotment sites this week. The position is currently on a fixed term basis for three months before being reviewed.

## **9. To note for information breakdown of costs for Christmas Lighting 2020**

The Chair updated Committee that the Quote received this year from BCBC was no more than the quote for last year; however, it was noted that this year might see a reduction of approximately £1,000.

## **10. To receive an update on the collection of Allotment Rent for the financial year 2020/21**

The Deputy Clerk (RFO) requested Committee to approve the use of a third account held with Lloyds Bank for the use of depositing allotment rents this year as unfortunately due to the COVID crisis the bank are unable to open any new business accounts.

**Resolved: Committee agreed to utilise the third account for this year with a view to opening an Allotment Rental account in the future.**

## **11. To discuss and consider Remembrance donations**

The Deputy Clerk (RFO) gave an update to Committee that in 2019 a Remembrance Café had been created and the proceeds were due to be given to the Bridgend Veteran Zone. A donation of £200 was raised however; as the Bridgend Veteran Zone did not have a bank account, the money was not submitted to them.

A discussion took place and the preferred option would be to donate to the Bridgend Veteran Zone should they set up a Bank account however if not, Committee agreed that a future discussion would need to take place.

## **12. Update on partnership tree planting schemes**

This agenda item was deferred for discussion alongside Agenda Item 22.

## **13. Update on completion of Town Centre signage renovations**

The Chair of Committee stated that in 2018, the Council had embarked on a partial refurbishment of the Town Centre signage posts but currently not all had been completed.

Further finger posts were needed to include directional posts to Carnegie House, the toilets within the Indoor Market and the toilets at the Bus Station. Cllr D. Unwin had undertaken a survey and concluded that 27 directional posts were required at a cost of £180 each totalling £4,860.

**Resolved: Committee agreed that a budget underspend of £5,000 within this year's budget and a projected £5,000 for next year would ensure the completion of the project.**

## **14. To consider ICT quotes from Bridgend County Borough Council**

### **a) ICT Switch for Bridgend Town Hall**

The Town Clerk explained that the provision of ICT services for Bridgend Town Council at Carnegie House is currently provided by BCBC. Members were advised that although there are BCBC network connections at the Town Hall building, recently a fibre connection to the BCBC IT Department at Sunnyside House had been severed which had resulted in the loss of IT connection to the Town Hall building. It was noted that a new fibre connection would be required for the Town Hall.

The Town Clerk explained that BCBC have not been charging BTC for the provision of IT services and that she had recently been notified that a new SLA would need to be negotiated with BCBC.

Members were also advised that a license for the provision of Citrix and Microsoft Office would be required at an approximate cost of £250 cost per user.

Committee discussed seeking a new supplier for the ICT provision, however it was agreed that staff resource to seek a new supplier at this time would be difficult.

Committee requested that the Town Clerk seek clarification on SLA costs for the provision of ICT services with BCBC and report back to Council for consideration.

### **b) BCBC Laptops**

The Deputy Clerk (RFO) had contacted BCBC to enquire about costs to purchase three additional laptops. A cost of £1,100 was obtained however further clarification on whether this figure is for each laptop or for the total cost to purchase three.

**Resolved: Deputy Clerk (RFO) to report costs to purchase three laptops to Committee when clarification is received.**

## 15. To discuss budget review and general reserves forecast for the year ending 31st March 2021

The Deputy Clerk (RFO) submitted a copy of the budget review: 02 to Committee for discussion and noted that the forecast income and spend are indicative and each item would be discussed, reviewed and amended by the Finance Committee and updated accordingly.

**Staff Costs** – variance shown as two posts are yet to be filled.

**Office Costs** – A reduction in printing costs was highlighted to date due to staff not in attendance at the office however as soon as possible a backlog of printing is required for financial audit.

**SLA's** – The Town Clerk informed Committee that the SLA for Building Maintenance held with BCBC had been suspended last year but the Town Council had not been informed of this decision and therefore these services would now need to be procured by the Town Council. The Deputy Town Clerk (RFO) suggested a forecast spend of £7,000 each year. **Action:** The Town Clerk would seek clarification from BCBC why the SLA was suspended without notification and an update would be brought back to the Finance Committee.

**Utilities** – a reduction in costs was noted due to the COVID crisis.

**NNDR** - A negative balance was noted but a possible rebate would be sought.

**Maintenance** – A small budget spend on cleaning products and COVID fogging for office clean will result in the budget being spent.

**Evergreen Hall** – a decision on the final quarter payment is still awaited and following a discussion it was agreed to return the £2,500 back to reserves and the Chair of Evergreen to be informed of this decision. **Action: Forecast spend to Zero**

**Military** – **Action: Forecast spend to Zero as parades had not taken place due to COVID crisis.**

**Advertising** – **Action: Spend to remain £1,000**

**Allotments: Action: Agreed to remain**

**Audit: Action: Agreed to remain**

**Contingency: Action: Agreed to remain**

**Petty Cash: Action: Agreed to remain**

**Building Works:** The Town Clerk informed Committee that some of the building works prioritised for last year had not been completed and also the SLA compliance issues and damp within the Carnegie House office area might result in some of the budget being allocated. It was suggested that a priority list would be needed to see what works can be undertaken within this financial year.

**Street Furniture: Action: Agreed to remain**

**Civic Activities: Action: Forecast Spend to zero due to COVID crisis.**

**Election Costs: Action: No election costs before March 2021 due to COVID crisis.**

**Members Expenses: Action: Agreed to remain**

**Christmas Lighting: Action: Agreed to remain and any surplus spend to go back to reserves.**

**Floral Display: Action: Forecast Spend to zero due to COVID crisis.**

**Landscaping: Action: Agreed to zero forecast spend and balance to go back to reserves.**

**Footpaths: Action: Agreed to remain.**

**Special Cleansing: Agreed: Agreed to zero forecast spend and balance to go back to reserves.**

**Summer Playscheme: Agreed: Forecast Spend to zero due to COVID crisis.**

**Carnegie House Programme: At the Community Engagement and Wellbeing Committee it identified a forecast spend of £19,000 with £23,000 balance to go back to reserves. It was noted that planned projects were affected by the COVID crisis.**

**Great Western Railway Project** – The £4,000 grant awarded to Bridgend Town Council from GWR four years ago had not been used. **Action:** Committee requested contacting GWA informing them of this to either return the fund or use it for a similar community project in the future. The £6,000

budgeted by Bridgend Town Council would have put in to support the project to go back into reserves.

**Tree Planting: Agreed: Balance to be put back to reserves and a new project to be discussed later in the agenda.**

**Town Litter Bins: Agreed to zero forecast spend and balance to go back to reserves.**

**Capital Assets Transfer: Agreed to zero forecast spend and balance to go back to reserves.**

**Bid Levy Project: Agreed: No longer required as a budget heading.**

**Town Centre Events: Agreed to zero forecast spend and balance to go back to reserves due to COVID crisis.**

**Staff Training:** The Town Clerk informed Committee that due to the COVID crisis this year staff training had been put on hold. However, some areas of training for the Outdoor Team were being explored. **Agreed: £2,500 to remain in budget to the end of this financial year and any remaining balance to go back into reserves.**

**Depedestrianisation: Agreed: No longer required as a budget heading.**

**Tourism: Agreed to remain.**

**Regeneration: Agreed to remain as the accurate figure submitted from Committee.**

**Wellbeing – Defibrillators – Agreed: To remain**

**Parks and Play Areas: Agreed to zero forecast spend and balance to go back to reserves.**

**Website Costs:** The Deputy Clerk (RFO) informed Committee that the council website is now outdated and further development and a rebuild is required. **Agreed: To remain**

**Town Plan: Agreed: Back to reserves and re-budgeted for the next financial year and in the second half of the year the Town Clerk would commence the community consultation element of the plan in readiness to inform future decision-making.**

**External Premises: Agreed to zero forecast spend and balance to go back to reserves.**

**Agenda Item 15 Continued: Additional Premises: Budget Heading 1620/1 -** The Town Clerk provided Committee with a copy of the Town Hall Project budget review and forecast spend to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 for discussion and amendments as decisions made by Committee.

**Office Costs: Agreed: costs not required by the end of this financial year due to the current COVID crisis.**

**SLA Cleaning Contract: Agreed: a new cleaning contract would be set up however it was not required by the end of this financial year.**

**SLA Computer Services: Agreed: The estimated costs of £15,000 to remain and if not complete by the end of this financial year (31<sup>st</sup> March 2021) balance to be earmarked.**

**SLA Building Maintenance:** Currently there is not an SLA in place for maintenance. The Facilities Manager noted that the fire alarm and intruder alarm maintenance and monitoring was necessary within the new Town Hall and also a CCTV contract to ensure the security of the building was paramount. **Agreed: To leave the forecast spend to zero up to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 and any future spend could be added later.**

**Utilities: Agreed: estimated costs to remain for the remainder of the year.**

**Utilities: NNDR: -** The Town Clerk informed Committee that a form to claim back empty property rate relief had been submitted to BCBC. **Agreed: Budget of £17,000 to remain and when building completed a full review would be undertaken.**

**Building Works:** An initial budgeted figure of £11,000 had now been projected to be increased to £60,000. Quotes have been requested from several Architects and Building Contractors and the deadline for submission is January 2021. However it was noted that it is unknown if the works would be completed by the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021. **Agreed: The forecast budget of £60,000 to remain and be earmarked if works not complete by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.**

**Floral display and Landscaping: Agreed: To remain at zero as unlikely to spend by the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.**

**Freelance Support: Agreed: An additional amount for the continuation of the project of £3,000.**

**Washroom Facilities: Agreed: To remain at zero at present**

**BTC relocation costs: Agreed: To remain at zero as not likely to spend before end of financial year.**

**Refurbishment Costs at Carnegie House: Agreed: To remain at zero**

**PWLB Loan Repayment:** Payments are made twice a year however due to delays in purchasing the property only one payment is required by the end of the financial year. **Noted**

**PWLB One off Costs: Agreed:** Payment made

**Refurbishment: Agreed: To remain at zero.**

**Post Office Re-direction: Agreed: To remain at zero**

**Staff Diary Management:** A new diary system was required to aid with room hire bookings and logging of payments to ensure an effective process was in place to record bookings for the Carnegie House Arts Centre and Town Hall. **Action: To review at the Community Engagement and Wellbeing Committee for consideration.**

**Additional Costs within the 2020/2021 budget:** The Town Clerk highlighted some additional expenditure not previously budgeted for which included Solicitors fees, legal fees for disbursements and land tax, along with a surveyor cost and architect fees. **Noted**

A request for design plan and building works has been submitted to several companies as an overall project and quotes are awaited. **Agreed: additional costs to merge with building works.**

**CCTV Maintenance and Monitoring:** The Town Clerk informed Committee that a new security contract would be required from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 and that she and the Facilities manager were liaising with companies to discuss CCTV arrangements at the Town Hall in the future. Currently CCTV equipment is hired at present at a cost of £250.00 per week. The Deputy Clerk (RFO) informed Committee that the existing supplier has four months left to run to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 at a cost of £4,000. **Agreed: £4,000 spend.**

**External Planning Consultant: Agreed: £5,000 budget will be required for this financial year**

**Fire Risk Assessment: Agreed To remain at zero**

**Hearing Loop System: Agreed to remain at zero**

**Security out of hour's key holding: Agreed £500 budget to end of financial year.**

**Access system maintenance: Agreed to remove**

**Radon Extractor Fan –Agreed: to remain a £50**

**Guttering – Agreed: to budget for £250 as a precautionary measure over the winter months.**

**Drainage: Agreed to remove £1,500**

**Waste Contract:** The Facilities Manager is currently seeking quotes as a new contract is to be set up, **Agreed: To remain £1,000**

**Meeting Closed:** The Meeting Closed at 1:15pm. Due to the length of the meeting, the following agenda items are to be deferred to a further Finance Committee Meeting to be held on the 8<sup>th</sup> December 2020 at 10:00 am via remote connection.

## **16. Facilities Management**

a) To receive an update regarding BCBC Building Maintenance SLA

b) To consider Facilities budget for the financial year 2021/22

**17. Town Hall**

a) To discuss Town Hall NNDR

b) To discuss Town Hall budget for the financial year 2021/22

**18. To discuss Evergreen Hall Lease Escrow account**

**19. To consider Grant Aid Applications**

a) Bridgend Carers Centre

b) Tŷ Hafan

**20. Correspondence**

a) Email from Cllr T Wood: Re: Commodities

b) Letter from Relate Cymru: Local Authority Funding Request

c) Letter from BCBC: Town and Community Council Fund 2021/22

**21. To consider information received regarding the Bridgend County Borough Council, summer holiday "Active 4 Life" programmes and thereon consider the provision of budget for 2021/22**

**22. To consider 2021/22 budget request from Regeneration Committee**

**23. To consider 2021/22 budget request from Community Engagement and Wellbeing Committee**

**24. To consider 2021/22 budget request from Personnel Committee**

**25. To consider draft budget for 2021/22 and to thereon make recommendations to Council for the Bridgend Town Council 2021/22 budget and precept**

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

Date.....