



## MINUTES OF THE BRIDGEND TOWN COUNCIL FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2018, 10am at Evergreen Hall

<b>Present:</b>	Cllr D Unwin (Chair) Cllr S Baldwin Cllr L Walters Cllr A Wathan Cllr C Webster Cllr P Warren (Ex-officio)
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**In attendance:** Mrs L Edwards (Town Clerk), Mrs D Jones (Deputy Town Clerk and RFO) and Mrs J Griffin (Democratic Services Admin Officer).

**1. To Receive Apologies for Absence.**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr M Voisey.

**2. Declarations of Interest (if any) of Members.**

Declarations of interest were recorded in the Declarations of Interests Register.

**3. To Receive Minutes of the Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2018.**

Cllr A Wathan referred to item 8, a request from Coity Higher Community Council regarding a donation towards the cost of a defibrillator serving the ward of Morfa and stated that he took no part in the discussion.

**RESOLVED:** that the amended minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2018 were received and confirmed as a true record and duly signed.

**4. Matters arising from the Minutes of the Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2018.**

- P.5 Street signage; Town Clerk advised Members that the street signage works have started however the finger posts are being painted in situ because they have been fixed with gutter bolts which are now difficult to unscrew and remove. She reported that the six finger posts situated at the bottom of Court Road and the five finger posts at the bottom of Station Hill have now been painted.
- P.5 Tourist signs; Clerk advised that this project is ongoing.
- P.5 Fuel Card; RFO reported that this action is complete and the card is in use.
- P.5 Deposit Accounts; RFO presented a report detailing short term deposit account information for each of the banks previously suggested.

**RESOLVED:** that Shawbrook Bank, Hodge Bank and Unity Bank are further investigated with emphasis placed on how each are regulated and registered as well as easy access to funds.

**RESOLVED:** that the RFO liaises with Cllr Walters on the best course of action for investing.

- P.5 Allotment Plot Markers; Clerk advised that this project is ongoing.
- P.6 Wartime Bridgend; Chair explained with consideration being given to holding the event over 2 days, extra funding will be required. He reported that a pre- application has been submitted to investigate the possibility of obtaining a grant from the Heritage Lottery.

#### **5. To Receive Quarterly Budget Review.**

- The RFO presented the quarterly budget review spreadsheet to Members.
- Members reviewed the spreadsheet.
- RFO reported that funds have been vired from the depedestrianisation budget to the building works budget and from the Street Furniture and Parks and Playing Fields budgets to the asbestos budget as previously resolved.
- Member enquired about staff pensions and asked if the increase of staff provision had been budgeted for. It was confirmed that the recommendation made by Nest is being met and was budgeted for.

#### **6. Review of Financial Governance.**

##### **6.1 BTC Financial Regulations.**

RFO referred Members to the BTC Financial Regulations document. Members discussed the document; there were no amendments proposed.

##### **6.2 BTC Statement of Internal Control.**

RFO referred Members to the Statement of Internal Control document. Members discussed the document and no amendments were proposed; RFO referred Members to agenda item 9 and reported that the document would be updated accordingly.

##### **6.3 BTC Investment Strategy**

RFO referred Members to the BTC Investment Strategy. Members discussed the document and there were no amendments proposed; RFO explained that the document would be updated following any future investment as discussed under matters arising.

##### **6.4 BTC Risk Assessment.**

RFO referred Members to the BTC Risk Assessment document. Members discussed the document and no amendments were proposed.

##### **6.5 Regulation 5 – Threshold Amounts.**

Presently any expenditure of over £3,000 requires quotations to be obtained. It was agreed that this amount should be increased to £4,000 and that the £500 that the Town Clerk is currently authorised to spend on such items as stationery and equipment is increased to £1,000.

##### **6.6 BTC Fixed Asset Register.**

RFO referred Members to the BTC Fixed Asset Register and explained that the register will need to be updated to remove items that were disposed of as a result of the asbestos situation and to include the

defibrillators when the installation is complete.

## **7. Carnegie House Building Works.**

### **7.1 Carnegie House Building Works Update.**

It was reported that the building work is on schedule. The construction work, electric supply, heating and decoration is all complete. I.T. cabling is being installed this week and the furniture is being delivered next week. It is planned for staff to return to Carnegie House week commencing 3rd October 2018.

### **7.2 Costs of Carnegie House Building Works Update.**

- Invoices to date total £3,000, however it was noted that additional invoices are due within the next week.
- It was reported that the CCTV camera outside Carnegie House has now been installed and the camera previously located in the Board Room has now been moved into the Council Chamber.

## **8. Carnegie House Basement Asbestos Update:**

### **8.1 Costs of Asbestos Removal Works to date**

- Town Clerk reported that the costs for testing and removal of the asbestos amounts to £11,578. This does not include the equipment which has been disposed of and will need to be replaced, at an approximate cost of £5,000.

### **8.2 Update on the Insurance Claim and Financial Recompense.**

- Town Clerk explained that the Insurance Company have been kept fully informed of the asbestos situation and have been provided with all relevant documentation, however, they have advised that claims against asbestos are not covered by the insurance policy. It has been confirmed that most business and home insurance policies contain exclusions for asbestos.
- Members considered the possibility of pursuing a claim against BCBC and discussed the written evidence and documents available to support this course of action.
- Members debated the best course of action particularly as the Town Council wants to build and maintain a good relationship with BCBC.

**RESOLVED:** that a letter is sent from the Town Council to BCBC appealing to them to assist the Town Council with the costs incurred for testing and removal of the asbestos and the expense of replacing the equipment which has been disposed.

## **9. To Consider Additional Bridgend Town Council Signatory.**

- The RFO requested that the Finance and Facilities Officer is included as an additional signatory on the bank mandate to assist with administration of petty cash and processing online payments.
- It was noted that current procedures provide adequate internal control and that the addition of the signatory will allow the Officer to input payments to the online banking system for approval by senior officers. It will also enable the officer to withdraw petty cash at the bank with an agreed cash limit, thus removing these tasks from the RFO.

**RESOLVED:** that the Finance and Facilities Officer is added as an additional signatory to the Bank Mandate.

#### **10. To Receive Bridgend Town Council Insurance Renewal Report for 2018/2019.**

- The Town Clerk advised that the Town Council insurance policy is due for renewal on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2018. She explained that WPS Insurance Brokers had carried out a tender process with 17 insurance companies and had shortlisted 3 companies for the provision of Town and Community Council insurance in the next financial year.
- Town Clerk advised that she had received a renewal quote of £5,280 for provision of insurance cover with Aviva insurance for 2018/19 as part of a 3 year contract. This equates to a saving of 23% on the previous year. Furthermore this policy will provide higher cover limits to some of the policy categories.
- Members discussed whether there should be additional cover in view of the asbestos covered pipes between the ground floor ceiling and the first floor of Carnegie House in case of flood damage. It was suggested that the Town Clerk should explore the possibility of taking out an indemnity policy to cover any costs associated with asbestos in the future.

**RESOLVED:** To accept the renewal quote from WPS Insurance and to explore the possibility of taking out an indemnity policy to cover any costs associated with asbestos in the future.

#### **11. To Consider Storage Options in Place of Carnegie House Basement.**

- Town Clerk explained that the basement of Carnegie House is not suitable as a storage area for outdoor workers equipment as it is prone to damp and liable to flood. Furthermore, she explained that a request had been received from BCBC for the Town Council to find alternative storage for the 'Dias' as they no longer have the space to store it at the BCBC Waterton depot.
- Town Clerk advised that she had viewed a vacant premise on Wyndham Street which regrettably does not appear to be suitable.
- Members discussed the 'Dias' and agreed that when the existing structure needs to be replaced a new 'modular' structure would be easier to store however in the interim, alternative storage would need to be found, preferably within the Town Centre.

**RESOLVED:** The BTC Facilities Manager will be asked to investigate the possibility of a storage unit and an enquiry to be made with Mr Barry King, Bridgend Festivals, to ask if he can store the dias as a temporary arrangement.

#### **12. To Consider the Purchase of Replacement Dog Waste Bins.**

- It was reported that 6 of the dog waste bins are leaking and require replacement.
- Members discussed if any more bins are required within the Town and it was suggested that one be placed at the top of Newcastle Hill.

**RESOLVED:** To purchase 8 replacement dog waste bins at a cost of £198 net for each bin.

#### **13. To Discuss the Tender Process for Town Centre Floral Displays Supplier**

- It was reported that the current 3 year contract with Plantscape expires in 2018.
- Members agreed that Plantscape had provided an excellent service over the years and the displays had been 'magnificent'. It was however suggested that enquiries should be made to find a local supplier, if possible, to support the local economy.

- Chair highlighted that the supplier is required to provide 375 ready planted hanging baskets and tiered structures similar to those used in recent years, install them and take them down as part of the service.
- It was noted that due to the amount of the contract, the process should go to tender for financial and auditing purposes. Member suggested that 'Sell 2 Wales' and 'e tender in Wales' can be used for this.
- It was also agreed that the current supplier would also be asked to quote for extending the contract at the same price.

**RESOLVED:** BTC staff to prepare a tender brief for the provision of floral displays for Bridgend Town Centre.

**14. To Consider a Resolution from the Well-being Committee to review the Grant Aid Scheme to offer Financial Support to Organisations that support the Well-being Agenda.**

- Members discussed the resolution and agreed that the Town Council is already mindful of providing grant aid to the third sector for the well-being of the local community and that the form which applicants have to complete ensures of this requirement.

**15. To Consider Grant Aid Applications.**

- RFO advised that a letter had been received from Ty Hafan Hospice requesting financial assistance. The required application form had been forwarded to Ty Hafan.
- It was reported that the budget of £5,000 for grant aid applications in 2018/2019 has £2,200 left for the remainder of the year.

**16. To Consider Beacon Brazier Gas Upgrade.**

- It was reported that the Facilities Manager had met with Engineers to discuss the possibility of converting the beacon to a gas fired facility. This would not be effective. Members then discussed issues with the lighting of the beacon.
- Resolved: It was agreed that Organised Chaos could be approached to ask if they could assist with the lighting of the Beacon in November.

**17. To Receive Update on Councillor Remuneration.**

- The Town Clerk advised that she had still not received clarification regarding the taxation of Councillor Remuneration and therefore was unable to process the payments.
- It was noted that the new BCBC Head of Democratic Services had offered to write to the Welsh Government and the Independent Remuneration Panel to request a definitive answer to the issue of how Councillors Remuneration should be paid and if it should be carried out via a payroll system in view of the tax position.

**RESOLVED:** No payments should be made to Councillors until clarity is obtained and that a copy of the letter is obtained from the Head of Democratic Services at BCBC.

**18. To Consider a Publication Scheme, Schedule of Payments.**

- Item deferred.

**19. To Discuss Budget for a BTC Business Plan, shaped by Residents.**

- Item deferred.

## **20. To Review Costs for a Franking Machine.**

- Item deferred.

## **21. To Receive Public Toilet Facilities Bridgend Town Centre Update.**

- Town Clerk provided an update regarding information provided to Danfo and explained that she is now awaiting a fully costed proposal.
- Members discussed the suggestion of a CAT transfer of the toilets at Cheapside and agreed that this had already been considered by the Town Council and ruled out.

## **22. To Receive River Ogmore Footway and Craig y Parcau Woods Works Progress Report.**

- Cllr Unwin updated Members on this project which is due for completion on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> September or early the following week. He explained that a launch event will be arranged in due course.

## **23. To Discuss Exterior Status of Carnegie House Periphery and possible Future Improvements.**

- Chair circulated a report to Members.
- Members discussed the rear fire exit for Carnegie House and the current condition of the alleyway leading from the rear exit to Adare Street.
- Town Clerk stated that she had obtained Land Registry documents for the building. It was noted that the building was still listed as Bridgend Library on the Land Registry website.
- It was confirmed that the side alley between Carnegie House and Poco Poco is within the boundary of the building and that the 6 foot high wall at the rear of the building forms rear boundary.
- Members discussed possible future plans to redevelop the rear alley. It was agreed that if the alleyway is opened up, the security of the building will need to be considered and that the back door of Carnegie House would need to be replaced.

**RESOLVED:** To seek further clarification regarding ownership and fire exit routes from the rear of Carnegie House.

**RESOLVED:** To appoint a fire safety company to advise on health and safety assessments that need to be carried out to ensure that BTC is meeting all fire safety regulations.

## **24. Christmas 2018.**

### **24.1 To review Costs of Christmas Lighting Installation.**

- Members were provided with an overview on the situation with an outstanding invoice for Christmas lights 2018. It was noted that the invoice is significantly over budget and has been queried with BCBC on a number of occasions but has not yet been resolved.
- Members suggested that until the dispute is resolved, no firm commitment will be made for this year.
- It was noted that the project was put out to tender in 2018 and 3 tenders were received. Member suggested that if the situation with BCBC is not resolved quickly, the two other companies could be approached to enquire if they could still provide an installation service in 2019 for the same costs.
- It was noted that the BTC Christmas lights are currently stored at the BCBC Waterton depot.

### **24.2 To consider the purchase of additional Christmas Column Features.**

- It was agreed that the 'cross street' lights should be disposed of and could be offered for sale or scrap.
- Members agreed that additional column lights should be purchased at a cost of £300/£500 each.

**24.3 To receive update on Victorian/Dickensian Christmas event date and preparations.**

- A report was circulated to Members detailing the proposed events/attractions planned to date.

**24.4 To review costs of Victorian/'Dickensian Christmas Event.**

- It was reported that the Town Council has budgeted £5,000 for the event and that Bridgend BID had offered an additional £1,000 and the Rhiw £500.
- Anticipated costs were reported at approximately £8,500. Members agreed that £2,000 could be vired from the Carnegie House budget.
- Members discussed charging for some of the attractions but no firm decision was taken. Some Members supported the idea that Town Centre events provided by the Town Council should be free of charge to the local community and therefore accessible to all.

**25. To Consider a Quote for Freelance Support for the Preparation of Funding Applications for 3 Grants for Carnegie House Arts Centre.**

- Members discussed a quote for 6 days freelance work to prepare three grant applications for Carnegie House Arts Centre for 2019. Two grants would be from the Arts Council of Wales; one to provide an ongoing programme of events and one would be a training grant for Arts Centre Marketing training for BTC staff. The other grant is from 'Awards for All' to cover the cost of continuing the annual Light Festival event in Bridgend.
- Members discussed other grant opportunities for Bridgend Town Council. It was suggested that staff could research what grants are available other than those for Carnegie House Arts Centre.

**26. To Receive BTC Audit Conclusion for the year ended 31 March 2018.**

- The RFO advised that the Town Council has passed the annual audit provided members with feedback from the auditor.
- Members thanked and congratulated the RFO for all the work she had completed for the audit.

**27. Date of Next Meeting – Tuesday 13th November 2018.**

- The date of the next meeting was noted.
- The Chair requested permission to attend the Saltex Exhibition at Birmingham to view outdoor equipment – Members agreed to this request.

**Meeting Closed: 12.25pm**

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

**Date:.....**