



## MINUTES OF THE BRIDGEND TOWN COUNCIL FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2018, 10am at Carnegie House Board Room

|                 |   |                                 |
|-----------------|---|---------------------------------|
| <b>Present:</b> | Cllr D Unwin (Chair)<br>Cllr L Walters<br>Cllr A Wathan | Cllr C Webster<br>Cllr M Voisey |
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**In attendance:** Mrs L Edwards (Town Clerk) and Mrs D Jones (Deputy Town Clerk/RFO).

### 1. To Receive Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr P Warren and Cllr S Baldwin.

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

There were no declarations of interest.

### 3. To confirm and Sign Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2018

**RESOLVED:** The minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2018 were received and confirmed as a true record and duly signed.

### 4. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2018

- Page.1 Street signage: Chair noted that significant progress had been made with re-painting of finger post signs in the Town Centre and advised that the project should be completed before Christmas.
- Page 2. Deposit Accounts: It was noted that due to unforeseen circumstances and a change in work priorities, no further progress had been made regarding the short term deposit accounts. The Deputy Clerk/RFO was asked to action this item as soon as possible.
- Page 2. Allotment Markers: It was noted that the allotment markers have not been purchased. The Town Clerk will chase this item with the Facilities Manager.
- Page 2. Wartime Bridgend: Chair explained that a grant application had been submitted to HLF for funding towards this event. He suggested that a two day event would not be financially viable without grant funding. Members also expressed concern about the resource required to plan and run a two day event. The Town Clerk will chase the progress of the HLF grant application with the Community Engagement and Wellbeing Manger.  
Member suggested that if Bridgend Town Council is unable to hold a two day event, other organisations could arrange complimentary events the day before the main Wartime Bridgend event.
- Page 3. Carnegie House Building Works Update: It was noted that the building works are now almost complete. The items that need to be finished are new handles for the windows in the office, security for

the rear doors, moving the CCTV system from the meeting room to the new office and moving the fob security system from the door of the old office to the door of the new office.

- Page 3. Asbestos Situation: Town Clerk advised that a letter had been drafted to BCBC however it had not been sent yet. Town Clerk was asked to send the letter as soon as possible. Town Clerk also advised that the insurance company will not cover for asbestos related incidents in the future.
- Page 4. Storage Options in Place of Carnegie House Basement: Chair explained that the former Lizzi's shop on Wyndham Street is currently being used as a temporary storage unit. It was noted that BTC also need to arrange suitable overnight parking facilities for the Town Council van. Investigations are ongoing to secure a longer term solution and staff have recently viewed two properties on Wyndham Street; one of which has a roller shutter door on Market Street and would be suitable to store the Council van. Costs are currently being sought and will be reported to Council in due course.
- Page 4. Tender Process for Town Centre Floral Displays Supplier: Town Clerk explained that due to other work, a tender process had not been undertaken for the provision of floral displays for 2019.
- Page 5. Beacon Brazier. An update was provided regarding the recent beacon lighting. It was noted that the preparation of the beacon and the lighting of the beacon was carried out by an external contractor. Members agreed that using an external contractor is a safer option and agreed that an external contractor should be used for future beacon lighting events.
- Page 5. Councillor Remuneration: It was noted that the issue of taxation of councillor remuneration had still not been resolved and that the deadline for making the payments was in September. Member commented that the First Minister had been asked to write to HMRC to obtain clarification on this issue. The Town Clerk was asked to write to the relevant body to advise that Bridgend Town Council cannot make the payments until clarity is received.
- Page 6. River Ogmore Footway and Craig y Parcau Woods Works Progress: Chair noted that the Craig-Y-Parcau Woodland Project is now complete and advised that a launch event has been planned onsite at 1pm on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> November.
- Page 6. Status of Carnegie House Periphery and possible Future Improvements: It was noted that a confidential report would be presented to Members later in the meeting.

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

A quarterly budget review was presented to Members. Deputy Town Clerk/RFO provided an overview of income, expenditure and variances to date and explained that she did not have any concerns to report to Members.

Members discussed the cost of the Christmas grotto. It was acknowledged that the ground floor hall is provided free of charge and the Bridgend Lions run the grotto for four Saturdays in the run up to Christmas. Member suggested that the costs for the Christmas grotto should be deducted from the money raised and not paid for by the Town Council.

Members briefly discussed Town Council reserves but agreed to review reserves as part of the draft budget planning for 2019/20.

**RESOLVED:** To accept the quarterly budget review for November 2018.

**RESOLVED:** That under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of agenda item 6 as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

**RESOLVED:** That the public and representatives of the press be permitted to join the meeting.

**7. To consider 2019/2020 budget request from Bridgend Town Council Regeneration Committee.**

- Clerk provided an overview of the Regeneration Advisory Committee meeting; Clerk advised Members that the 2019/2020 budget request from Bridgend Town Council Regeneration Committee is £6,500.
- Members discussed the request.
- Member proposed that the budget is not increased and should remain at £5,000 as allocated in 2018-19. This was not seconded.
- Member proposed that the budget should be increased to £6,500 to cover the cost of the projects outlined. Chair of Finance Committee seconded the motion in favour of a budget allocation of £6,500.

**RESOLVED:** That a budget of £6,500 is allocated to the Bridgend Town Council Regeneration Advisory Committee for 2019-2020.

**8. To consider budgetary requirements in relation to provision of Toilet Facilities within Bridgend Town Centre.**

- Clerk advised Members that at the recent Bridgend Town Council Regeneration Committee meeting a quote from a toilet supplier was received and discussed; she reported that the quote was for the sum of £47,500 annually over a 20 year contract.
- Clerk reported that she had been advised that the quote could be renegotiated however further legal advice would need to be sought before any decisions are made; She explained that the Regeneration Committee recommended that this item, due to the cost of the project and the financial regulations governing Town and Community Councils be referred to the full Town Council meeting of Monday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2018 for further discussion.

**9. To consider 2019/2020 budget request from Bridgend Town Council Community Engagement and Wellbeing Committee:**

- Clerk provided an overview of the discussions of the Bridgend Town Council Community Engagement and Wellbeing Committee and advised Members that the 2019/2020 budget request from Bridgend Town Council Community Engagement and Wellbeing Committee is £31,000 to facilitate the annual Carnegie House programme, to continue to provide the annual Light Festival and to provide match funding for grants that have been applied for.
- Clerk reported that £20,000 is requested to facilitate town centre events including a 2019 Wartime Bridgend event and a further £5,000 is requested to facilitate Christmas 2019 events.
- Member questioned if the annual Light Festival should continue; Clerk explained that the Light Festival is a 3 month project that engages with local schools, provides free lantern workshops for the community, works with local artists to facilitate the workshops and parade which over 2000 members of the public attended.
- Members discussed the benefit of school and community engagement and the growing of audiences and partnerships for future projects.

**RESOLVED:** That a budget of £31,000 is allocated to the Community Engagement and Wellbeing Committee for 2019-2020, that a budget of £20,000 is allocated to Town centre events for 2019-2020 and that a budget of £5,000 is allocated to facilitate Christmas events 2019.

**10. To receive 2019/2020 budget recommendation from Bridgend Town Council Personnel Committee.**

- Chair advised Members that the 2019/2020 budget request from the Bridgend Town Council Personnel Committee reflects the new rates set by the SLCC.

**RESOLVED:** To accept the budget request from the Bridgend Town Council Personnel Committee.

**11. To receive 2019/2020 budget request from Evergreen Hall.**

- Deputy Clerk/RFO referred Members to the 2019/2020 budget request of £10,000 from Evergreen Hall.
- Chair highlighted the decrease of £2,000 from the previous year.
- Members discussed the progress of Evergreen Hall to date.
- Members discussed the charge to Bridgend Town Council for the use of office space at Evergreen Hall during the asbestos and building works.
- Member noted that the budget request included a cost of £1,000 for Legionella testing which is the duty of Bridgend Town Council to complete as lease holder.

**RESOLVED:** That a budget of £9,000 is allocated to Evergreen Hall for 2019-2020, and that a budget of £1,000 is allocated to Evergreen Hall Legionella testing for 2019-2020.

*Cllr C Webster left the meeting*

**12. To consider budgets for possible Capital Asset Transfer projects 2019/2020.**

- Town Clerk provided information regarding a request from Bridgend Athletic Club; she explained that the lease for the athletics club is due for renewal and the athletics track is in need of urgent repair.
- Town Clerk explained that she had spoken to the BCBC CAT Officer and had been informed that grant funding may be available for this project. It was noted that the Athletics Club would need to raise match funding towards the project and it had been suggested that this could be up to £10,000 however no firm figures have been provided.
- Member expressed concern at setting a precedent for sports clubs in need of financial support.
- Chair suggested that a budget could be allocated to CAT projects and if request are received they can be considered in the same way as grant aid applications.
- Members agreed to defer discussion of this request following review of the draft 2019/2020 budget.

**13. To receive 2019/2020 budget request from Town Twinning Association.**

- Chair availed members of a letter received from the Treasurer of Bridgend Town Twinning Association detailing 2 possible choral visits from Langenau to Bridgend in October 2019 and the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Bridgend being twinned with Villenave d'Ornon in 2019.
- Members noted the Civic aspect of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary and agreed that budget should be allocated and plans made to mark this occasion as Bridgend Town Council signed the Charter.
- Chair proposed that Bridgend Town Twinning Association submit a grant application for funding within the 2019/20 financial year as in the previous financial year.
- Clerk reported that Langenau have advised that Bridgend Town Council will receive a Civic invitation in 2019; Chair proposed that this is budgeted for accordingly. Members agreed.

**14. To consider draft Budget and Precept requirements for 2019/2020 and to thereon make recommendations to Council for the 2019/2020 Precept.**

- Deputy Town Clerk/RFO advised that forecast reserves to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 are £233,856.958 as at 20<sup>th</sup> November 2018. She highlighted that this is a forecast and is likely to change by the end of the year.
- Member proposed that a Reserves Policy is created to stipulate that Bridgend Town Council reserves are no less than 3 months expenditure and no more than 6 months expenditure. Members agreed.

**RESOLVED:** Deputy Town Clerk/RFO to create a Reserves Policy for approval by Council.

- Members noted that Bridgend Town Council requires flexibility for any unexpected expenditure and any additional responsibilities from unknown sources during each financial year.
- Deputy Town Clerk/RFO presented a draft budget for 2019/2020.
- Members reviewed each budget within the draft spreadsheet and approved the draft budgets set for Staff Costs, Office Costs, and SLA's.
- Deputy Town Clerk/RFO referred Members to costings for the implementation of Modern.gov; Members were in agreement that the cost of implementation is too high and were not in support of this.
- Members approved the draft budgets for Utilities and Maintenance; Member stated that he would investigate the cost of purchasing a larger, fit for purpose van for outdoor maintenance.
- Chair proposed that the Community Skip Scheme is suspended for the new financial year. Members agreed.
- Chair availed Members of a letter received from the Chair of St John's House Trust and proposed that a budget of £5,000 is allocated to St John's House Trust for 2019/2020. Members agreed.
- Members discussed landscaping works to date and the reduction of the draft 2019/2020 budget set for Landscaping; Member proposed that the £10,000 draft budget be reduced to £8,000. Members agreed.
- Member expressed concern regarding a budget of £5,000 for Tree Planting. Chair explained that there is a national tree planting project with 22 authorities in Wales taking part. Members discussed the possible locations of future tree planting and the value of facilitating this project.
- Members discussed the draft budget of £10,000 for Bus Facilities. Chair explained that the money would cover bus shelters and repairs to the doors in the bus station.
- Members discussed email correspondence requesting the expansion of the Defibrillator Scheme to Cefn Glas and Wildmill. It was noted that the defibrillator in the bus station requires new pads in the forthcoming months. Members were in agreement to budget £2,000 for the maintenance of existing defibrillators and for match funding towards the installation of new defibrillators in 2019-20.
- Members discussed the proposed total budget and the percentage increase of the precept in previous years.
- Members discussed the allocation of reserves to reduce the increase in Precept for 2019/2020.
- Member proposed that £200,000 is left in reserves to cover approximately 4 months expenditure.

**RESOLVED:** To propose a precept budget of £592,691.25 for financial year 2019-20 which equates to a precept increase of 7%.

**15. To consider a public statement regarding the Precept for 2019/20.**

- Chair presented a draft public statement regarding the Budget and Precept for 2019/2020.
- Chair proposed that he would amend the draft public statement to reflect the proposed budget amendments agreed at the meeting in readiness for discussion at the full Town Council meeting on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2018. Members agreed.

**16. Date of Next Meeting**

Chair proposed that the next meeting be held on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2019.

**Meeting Closed: 13.30pm**

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

**Date:.....**