



MINUTES OF THE BRIDGEND TOWN COUNCIL FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

Meeting Details:

Date: Monday 19th October 2021

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: L Edwards (Town Clerk), D Jones (Deputy Town Clerk/RFO) Rhiannon Stone (Acting Facilities Manager) H Jenkins (Finance & HR Officer)

In attendance:

D Unwin

A Wathan

S Blestoe

I Williams

M Blundell-Humphreys

1. To receive apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Councillor T Wood and Councillor M Voisey.

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

Declarations of interest were received from Councillor S Bletsoe on item 21c as a personal interest as governor of Pen-y-Bont Primary School.

Councillor I Williams declared a personal interest on item 20b as part of group to raise funds.

Councillor A Wathan declared a personal interest on item 17

3. To confirm and sign the Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on 6th July 2021

The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate recording of discussion made and duly signed.

4. To consider matters arising from the Finance Committee Meeting held on 6th July 2021

No matters arising were raised.

5. To confirm and sign the Minutes of the Extra-Ordinary Finance Committee Meeting held on 9th September 2021

The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate recording of discussion made and duly signed.

6. To consider matters arising from the Extra-Ordinary Finance Committee Meeting held on 9th September 2021

No matters arising were raised.

7. To confirm and sign the Minutes of the Extra-Ordinary Finance Committee Meeting held on 13th September 2021

The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate recording of discussion made and duly signed.

8. To consider matters arising from the Extra-Ordinary Finance Committee Meeting held on 13th September 2021

The Town Clerk updated Committee that she is looking into the provision of flood insurance which is yet to be put in place.

9. To receive 2020/21 Audit update

The Deputy Clerk noted to Committee that no audit opinion had been received to date by the Welsh Audit Office with a delay due to the current COVID crisis. However, it was noted that with compliance with law the annual return had been published online explaining that the accounts are unaudited at present and displayed on the notice board outside Carnegie House.

10. To receive 2021/22 Quarter 2 Budget Review

The Deputy Clerk provided an update to the paper presented to Committee explaining that the budget review was straightforward with conversations against budgets yet still to be had at forthcoming Committee meetings.

It was noted that there was a current underspend in relation to the additional premises with this item to be discussed further in the meeting under agenda item 18.

11. To receive Evergreen Hall Lease Escrow Account update

The Deputy Clerk noted that the Town Clerk had contacted Evergreen Hall in the Deputy Clerks absence and a response had now been received from the Chair of the Evergreen Hall Committee explaining that at a recent AGM meeting the trustees will be looking ahead at the governance which would be resolved by Christmas.

12. To review and approve costs for 2021 Christmas Lighting Provision

The Deputy Clerk updated Committee that adhering to our financial obligations the Facilities Manager had contacted the unitary authority for quotes along with trying to obtain quotes from other sources for the Christmas lighting provision for this year.

Unfortunately, BCBC have yet to respond to the request and the quote is still awaited from them and this has been chased up by the Facilities Manager.

The Deputy Clerk informed Committee that BCBC currently install lighting which Bridgend Town Council owns, however other companies do not operate in the same way and use a hiring business model instead which has resulted in quotes being difficult to obtain.

Committee discussed the options and concluded that having historically used the services of BCBC for the past few decades it would seem sensible to continue bearing in mind the cost of the quotation is around the previous year's costing of £16,000.

The Town Clerk requested Committee to consider and approve if they would be happy to proceed should costs have increased this year by around £1,000.

Resolved: Committee agreed the continuation of BCBC to provide the Christmas lighting for 2021 providing the quotation does not exceed the £1,000 possible increase on the budget for last year.

13. To discuss Christmas donation to The Lions Club Bridgend

The Clerk updated Committee that a discussion had been held with the Lions Club holding a grotto in Carnegie House, however they felt the risk was far too great due to the pandemic. A further discussion on the possibility of having the grotto placed outside adhering to social distancing was also discussed and an enclosed covered area outside was offered, however the Lions Club concluded that they feel they do not wish to proceed this year.

Committee discussed the option of using the area within the Rhiw Market and suggested investigating this with the Lions Club.

Committee agreed to defer the decision of a donation to the Lions Club this year until any offer is made by them and whether a formal request is made by them of a donation.

Resolved: Committee agreed to defer the decision of donating to the Lions Club until a formal request if made.

14. To review and approve costs for Annual Footpath Maintenance

The Chair informed Committee that as a statutory requirement to maintain footpaths Cllr D Unwin asked Committee to consider the quote he had received, and Committee were asked to consider and approve the costs.

Resolved: Cllr. A Wathan moved the approval of the quote which was seconded by Cllr I Williams.

15. To consider costs for the purchase of Staff/Business Mobile Phones

The Clerk noted that she had received the previous office phone from the staff member who is on long term sick leave at present and following approval from Committee had purchased a top up SIM card.

The Clerk also noted that having upgraded her own mobile phone she now has a spare handset which could be used by the Facilities Manager and requested approval from Committee to consider the purchase of a second SIM card and top up credit.

The issue of the Deputy Clerk and Community Engagement Manager still needs to be considered as they are currently using their own personal mobile phones.

Resolved: Committee approved the purchase of top up credit for the two mobile phone handsets.

16. To discuss Deputy Mayor Chains of Office refurbishment

The Town Clerk informed Committee that costs for the refurbishment of the Deputy Mayors chains would need to be sought from the company Fattorini who had previously undertaken the refurbishment of the Mayors chains.

Committee discussed this issue and requested that under the delegated authority should the quote be around £1,000 they would be happy to approve the costs.

Resolved: Committee approved the refurbishment costs if the quote does not exceed £1,000 and wished to move forward appointing delegated authority to the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk.

17. To consider the purchase of Past Mayors Pendants

The Deputy Clerk noted that the purchase of past mayors' pendants was delayed due to the pandemic and therefore requested Committee to consider progress to be made.

The Deputy Clerk noted that a quote had been obtained from Fattorini and asked Committee to consider the cost of purchasing three pendants at £295.54 each excluding VAT.

Resolved: Committee agreed to the purchase and when obtained one would be given out with two remaining until required.

18. To review Town Hall budget to date and forecast expenditure to 31st March 2022

The Deputy Clerk had submitted a paper to Committee and provided an overview of spend to date and forecast spend to 31 March 2022. It was noted that as the provision of utilities is a statutory requirement this should be set to one side.

Committee discussed looking at a ballpark figure of spend for this financial year of around £100,000 with a view to re-budget for a further spend from the 1st April 2022

Committee requested the Deputy Clerk to closely monitor the spend as it was not static and to review and update at further Committee meetings or to call further meetings should this be required.

Action: The Deputy Clerk would provide a printed copy of the Town Hall budget and forecast expenditure to 31st March 2022 to be sent following the meeting. It was noted that it does not include the wider council budgets with some items forecast as a zero spend which still need to be required for next year and will need to be included within the budget with further discussion at the various November and December Committee meetings.

19. Review of Governance Documents

a) Risk Assessment

Resolved: Committee agreed to defer this item to the next Finance Committee meeting.

20. To consider Grant Aid Applications

a) To review quotes for Waunscil Avenue Allotment site Storage Container.

The Chair of Committee noted that this item had been discussed previously with the approval of payment to the Waunscil Allotment Society, however consideration was required of Committee as to whether Bridgend Town Council should purchase the container as a Bridgend Town Council asset to reclaim £390 VAT against the purchase.

Committee discussed the issues of the public liability risk of items to be stored along with increased insurance costs and the Facilities Manager noted the increased workload that would be needed to undertake a risk assessment for delivery of the container along with traffic management and management of access to the storage around GDPR issues.

Resolved: Committee agreed following discussion to approve the offer of a Grant Aid donation to Waunscil Allotment Society subject to the quote which had been received in May 2021 still being honoured.

b) To receive update from Bridgend Association of Bowls, Tennis and Squash Clubs

The Deputy Clerk provided a paper to Committee giving an overview of grant aid budget spend and requested Committee to consider releasing the previously approved fund for the Bridgend Association of Bowls, Tennis and Squash Clubs following the confirmation of the commencement of works which had now been received.

Resolved: Committee approved the release of grant aid having received confirmation of the commencement of works.

21. Correspondence

a) Letter from BCBC: Agency Agreement for Public Rights of Way

The Chair of Committee informed members that there had been no increase since 2007 and welcomed the updated grant to sixteen participants resulting in a reclaim of £297.

Resolved: Committee welcomed the small refund which will be requested to BCBC and reclaimed against past works.

b) Letter from Bridgend Town Cricket Club: Installation of Public Access External Defibrillator at Bridgend Town Cricket Club

Committee discussed the quote presented to members and approved the £585 grant to provide this necessary equipment.

Resolved: Committee approved the grant aid of £585

c) Letter from Penybont Primary School: Request for Financial Assistance

Committee discussed the request for financial assistance from Penybont Primary school which was supported by Cllr. S Bletsoe and seconded by Cllr. A Wathan and Cllr M Blundell-Humphreys.

Resolved: Committee agreed to support the request in principle following the completion of the necessary grant aid application which will be submitted to them.

The Meeting Closed: 11.15 am

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

Date.....