

BARRY TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE, POLICY & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY, 16 NOVEMBER 2020 AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillors Drake, N Hodges, S A Hodges, Lloyd-Selby (Vice Chairperson), Rowlands and Wilkinson.

ALSO PRESENT: Emily Forbes – Chief Officer
Mark Sims – Deputy Chief Officer
Rhian Burns – Administrator
Councillor Charles - Observer
Councillor Clarke - Observer
Councillor Johnson – Observer
Councillor Payne - Observer

F244. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Brooks.

F245. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None were received.

F 246. WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS (WALES) ACT 2015

It was noted that this Act sets out the requirement for a public body to act in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

In order to act in that manner, a public body must take account of the following things:

the importance of balancing short term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to meet long term needs, especially where things done to meet short term needs may have detrimental long term effect;

(b) the need to take an integrated approach, by considering how—
(i) the body's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals;
(ii) the body's well-being objectives impact upon each other or upon other public bodies' objectives, in particular where steps taken by the body may contribute to meeting one objective but may be detrimental to meeting another;

(c) the importance of involving other persons with an interest in achieving the well-being goals and of ensuring those persons reflect the diversity of the population of the part of Wales in relation to which the body exercises functions;

(d) how acting in collaboration with any other person (or how different parts of the body acting together) could assist the body to meet its well-being objectives, or assist another body to meet its objectives;

(e) how deploying resources to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may contribute to meeting the body's well-being objectives, or another body's objectives.

F247. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE, POLICY & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE'S MEETING HELD ON 27 JANUARY 2020

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee's meeting held on 27 January 2020 be approved and signed as a correct record.

F 248. TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE SUSTAINABLE BARRY WORKING PARTY HELD ON 19 OCTOBER 2020

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Sustainable Barry Working Party's meeting held on 19 October 2020 be received and noted.

F249. SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS FOR NOVEMBER 2020

Members received the schedule of payments for November 2020 consisting of direct debits and BACS payments, in the amount of £40,374.69.

RESOLVED: That the schedule of payments for November 2020 consisting of direct debits and BACS payments, in the amount of £40,374.69 be approved.

F250. BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 31 OCTOBER 2020

Members received a report containing details of the Council's income and expenditure in the 2020/21 financial year as at the end of October 2020.

RESOLVED: That the budget monitoring report for October 2020, indicating actual income and expenditure up to the end of month seven in the 2020/21 financial year be received, noting the projected overspend of £108,277 for 2020/21 that will result in a net amount of £212,392 being transferred from reserves.

F251. COVID-19 RECOVERY FUND ALLOCATION

Members received an update on Covid-19 Recovery Fund expenditure and determined the future of the Fund and its financial allocation.

Members agreed that the grants scheme had been very successful and that the approach to allocate as much funding as possible to support

local businesses and community groups had been the right course of action.

The Deputy Chief Officer advised that 117 applications had been approved, with a further 25 applications pending. He noted that of these applications 119 had been received from businesses and 23 from community groups. It was agreed that one weeks' notice would be given for any further applications in the 2020/21 financial year to be made.

The Chief Officer suggested that the projected overspend in current applications of £30,949 could be balanced by utilising the £10,000 books for schools allocation and by making the following virements totalling £20,949 from existing budgets –

M&S/Cleaning £550
M&S/Postage £1,000
M&S/Stationery £1,000
M&S/Photocopier £2,000
M&S/Property Maintenance £ 2,000
M&S/Equipment £2,000
M&S/Equipment Maintenance £1,000
M&S/Welsh Translation Service £2,000
Cemetery/PPE £1,000
Cemetery/Water £1,000
Cemetery/Electricity £1,000
Cemetery/Fuel £1,000
Civic/Civic Hospitality £2,200
Civic/Medallions and Plaques £2,000
Civic/Photographical Services £250
Civic/Mayors Allowance £949

Members felt that any remaining funds should be reserved for the support of community groups who were currently not operating but would require recovery funding to allow them to restart activities.

Members agreed that it was difficult to plan for the 2021/22 as there were still so many unknown factors and that any significant decisions on the future of Grant Funding should be delayed until the Budget meeting in February 2021.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That 23 November 2020 be the cut-off date for accepting grant applications and the Covid-19 Recovery Fund be closed.**
- 2. That the projected overspend in current applications of £30,949 be balanced by utilising the £10,000 books for schools allocation and virements made from other budgets totalling £20,949 as outlined above.**

3. That a virement of £40,000 be made from the Acquisitions Reserve to the Covid-19 Recovery Fund.

F252. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES – DRAFT BUDGET 2021/22

Members received recommendations from the Halls, Cemeteries and Community Facilities Committee and the Shop Local Barry Advisory Committee relating to the draft budget for 2021/22.

Members agreed that a decision on the Shop Local recommendation would be made as part of the wider discussion on the draft budget at Agenda item 10.

RESOLVED:

1. That the cemetery interment fees, exclusive rights of burial fees and memorial fees be increased by 2% from 1 April 2021.
2. That there is no increase in other cemetery fees e.g. Babies Memorial Garden plaques, Garden of Remembrance plaques and Octagonal Planter plaques, Sanctum Panorama Columbaria, searches, duplicate deeds, transfer deeds, use of chapel etc.
3. That there is no increase in the Pioneer Hall charges from 1 April 2021 thereby retaining the hourly charges as £10 per hour and £20 per hour respectively and the Children's Party package to £60.
4. That the same charges are applied to the use of the Cemetery Approach Community Hall.
5. That an additional £4,000 is included in the budget for 2021/22 for the purpose of training for Cemetery staff
6. That an additional £3,500 is included in the Corporate training budget for 2021/22, noting that the Business Case is to be agreed by the Personnel Committee electronically.

F253. DRAFT BUDGET 2021/22

Members were provided with the draft budget 2021/22 for recommendation to the meeting of Full Council to be held on 8 December 2020 that would then go out for public consultation.

The Deputy Chief Officer noted that he had attended a webinar with the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) during their Virtual National Conference 12-16 October 2020 on Budgeting in Uncertain Times. The panel had advised adopting a pragmatic approach and setting two

budgets setting out best and worst case scenarios for income and expenditure for members to consider.

The Deputy Chief Officer advised that he has provided members with the 'worst case' budget scenario in order to simplify the discussion. He noted that provisional deficit for the year of £66,000 would require a 5.5% increase to the precept (this would be reduced to 4.4% with the provisional increase in the tax base of 1%. This would represent an increase of £2.57 per annum to a Band D tax payer.

Members agreed that it was very difficult to make a decision on the 2021/22 budget when so many factors being still unknown.

Councillor Lloyd-Selby noted that there were three options for balancing the budget– increasing the precept, using money from reserves or reducing spend.

Councillor Johnson noted that the draft budget would need to be discussed by Full Council in December 2020 before going out to public consultation for a final decision to be made in February 2021. He also noted that he felt that reserves should be put to best use during this period.

Members agreed that if the Cemetery Approach Community Centre was not operational it would not be necessary to recruit a staff member in the early part of the year, therefore three months staffing costs could be removed from the draft budget.

Members also felt it would be unlikely that both Halls would be closed completely for the entire year. They agreed that including three months' income for the 2021/22 financial year would be a realistic yet prudent figure.

Members agreed that the £5,000 increase to the Shop Local budget for the purpose of promotion of local businesses through social media should be included in the draft budget.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the 2021/22 draft budget be approved subject to the amendments below.**
- 2. That £5,000 be added to the Shop Local budget.**
- 3. That staffing costs for the Cemetery Approach Caretaker role be removed for the first quarter of the 2021/22 financial year.**

4. That one quarter income for the Pioneer Hall and the Cemetery Approach Community Centre be included in the draft budget 2021/22.

RECOMMENDED: To a meeting of Full Council to be held on Tuesday 8 December 2020, that a precept of £1,253,986 be levied on the Vale of Glamorgan Council which would result in the cost to a “Band D” Council-tax payer increasing to 60.68 per year, an increase of 3.8% when compared with the £58.44 paid in 2020/21.

F254. TO REVIEW AND APPROVE NEW POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

- i) **Personnel Committee 12 October 2020 – Petitions Policy**

RESOLVED: That the Petitions Policy be agreed and adopted.

- ii) **Personnel Committee 12 October 2020 - Pensions and Retirement Policy**

RESOLVED: That subject to staff and union consultation the Pensions and Retirement Policy be agreed and adopted.

F255. GDPR UPDATE

The Chief Officer advised that there had been no issues or data breaches to report.

RESOLVED: That the update be received and noted.

F256. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED that the next meeting of the Finance, Policy and General Purposes Committee will be held on Monday, 8 February 2021.

F257. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public are excluded from the remainder of the meeting.

F258. TO DISCUSS THE MHT FUNDING AGREEMENT FOLLOWING A DISCUSSION WITH MHT TRUSTEES ON 11 NOVEMBER 2020

Members received a copy of the funding agreement between Barry Town Council and the Memorial Hall and Theatre. The Chief Officer

noted that she had also circulated financial reports received from the Memorial Hall and Theatre Trust to Members prior to the meeting.

A lengthy, detailed discussion took place. It was felt that further clarity was required regarding the Memorial Hall and Theatre Trust's income and expenditure. It was felt that this scrutiny was required due to the large sums of public money involved.

Concerns around the governance of the Memorial Hall and Theatre were also raised and the lack of invitation to the Leader of the Council to Ordinary Board meetings as per Grant Agreement.

Members agreed that the Chief Officer should write to the Memorial Hall and Theatre Manager and Trustees to set out these issues in more detail and invite them to a meeting to discuss. It was agreed that a representative from each group would also attend. The following Councillors were nominated for this ; Councillors Brooks, Johnson and Rowlands.

Members agreed that the final quarter grant funding payment should not be made until Council was satisfied that the conditions of the Grant Agreement were being fulfilled by the Memorial Hall and Theatre Trust.

RESOLVED: That the Chief Officer seek legal advice on suspending the final quarter grant funding payment pending a meeting with the Memorial Hall and Theatre Manager and Trustees to discuss the concerns raised to seek reassurances that Grant Conditions are being complied with.

The meeting closed at 8.36pm.

Signed..... (Chairperson) Date.....