

**Minutes of the Finance & Governance Meeting
held (electronically) on Thursday 28th January 2021**

Present: Cllr's M Clarke, N Clarke, A Harris, T Hill, B Lewis, J Pratt, R Smith

Clerk: S Watkins

In attendance: Phil Lewis FCCA, PML Accountants, Cllr L Tallon-Morris

1. Apologies for Absence

None.

2. Declaration of Interest

None.

3. To consider item – Enhanced Councillor DBS checks (as deferred from the Full Council meeting held on 14th January 2021)

Cllr B Lewis left the meeting.

It was advised that this item was deferred from the last Full Council in order to consider the DBS options further in connection with the setting up of a Youth Council.

It was suggested that a small delegated budget could perhaps be agreed which could be used for any projects that the Youth Council may wish to bring forward once in place.

It was advised that some Members already have a DBS in place.

Some concern was raised as to who would have access to the Councillor DBS records and adjudicate the information received. Members were informed that should we continue to explore and implement a Youth Council then Porthcawl Town Council would have a legal duty to apply for enhanced Councillor DBS checks for the task force Members. It was also advised that the DBS check would protect both Councillors as mentors and the Youth Council members alike.

Members were reminded that Councillors J Pratt, A Harris and L Tallon-Morris were the task force members chosen by Council for the Youth Council.

Cllr B Lewis re-joined the meeting.

Resolved to recommend: - That Councillors J Pratt, A Harris and L Tallon-Morris (taskforce for the Youth Council) takes note of the enhanced DBS check and to place

on the next F & G Agenda for further exploration. Enquiries to be made by the taskforce team with Kelly Watson, Monitoring Officer, BCBC in relation to the legality of Council DBS checks.

4. For information – Approved End of Year Accounts (as agreed at the Full Council meeting held on 14th January 2021 - held under separate cover)

A query was raised regarding an invoice that was paid in early 2020 in that it is understood that the works were possibly not completed. It was advised that in line with procedures the invoice was approved by the previous Mayor of Council prior to payment being made.

Resolved to recommend: That the Clerk contacts the appropriate supplier on the invoice discussed and report back to the Chair of the Finance & Governance Committee and subsequently report back to the whole of the Finance & Governance Committee under Private & Confidential (on pink).

5. For information – Porthcawl Town Council Precept 2021/2022 and associated documents (attached) (Precept approved by Full Council on 14th January 2021)

Members were informed that the Precept Process that was passed by Council in 2018 was duly followed in this instance and that One Voice Wales had also confirmed that council had fulfilled its statutory obligations.

It was explained that Council currently have two policies in place relating to the Precept process advising of conflicting procedures. It was suggested that an amendment perhaps be made in the Precept Process policy to state that the Draft Precept be considered by the Finance & Governance Committee prior to full council as currently set out in this Committees Terms of Reference.

A query was raised by a Member as to why no accounts had been presented to the Finance & Governance Committee for eight months. Members were reminded that the accounts had been presented to Members at the Finance & Governance Committee both in July and September as required. It was further advised that the accounts were due to be discussed at the Finance & Governance committee meeting scheduled in November, however, this meeting had been cancelled due to the Clerk's authorised absence.

Members were advised that there were only a minor amount of queries raised by an individual Councillor prior to the precept being discussed at the Full Council meeting.

Members were reminded that should they have any queries regarding any accounts presented to the Finance & Governance committee that these should be addressed with the Responsible Financial Officer prior to the meeting taking place to save valuable time at the meeting.

It was advised that the refurbishment of the roundabouts should not be placed under the Operations Committee heading as the Promoting Porthcawl Committee would be taking this project forward.

Resolved to recommend: - To note for information.

6. To approve item – December 2020 Accounts (held under separate cover)

It was advised that the previous Town Clerk & RFO used to provide a monthly breakdown of Council payments which included the supplier details and also a financial statement on any income received alongside the accounts. Members agreed that this procedure should be re-instated once the new Town Clerk & RFO is in place.

Concern was raised that the expenditure budget is difficult to follow on the present accounts format.

Members were reminded that there had not been an RFO in place for the last 12 months. Huge thanks were given to Cllr R Smith for all the hard work that he had undertaken with regards to the Precept and the Accounts for the past year. It was advised that any future queries relating to the accounts should be directed to the new Town Clerk & RFO when in post.

It was explained that the expenditure for the pavements/dropped kerbs that was included in the Council's ten pledges was based over two financial years and that the payments are all in line with the original agreed budget.

Members were advised that the cleansing of John Street Public Conveniences is placed under the Town Maintenance budget heading.

Resolved: To approve December 2020 Accounts as presented.

7. Clerk's Report

Nothing to report.

The meeting concluded at 9.12pm