

PORHCOWL TOWN COUNCIL



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD (ELECTRONICALLY) ON THURSDAY 14th OCTOBER 2021

PRESENT:

COUNCILLORS: T Hill

M Chegwen	R Lee
M Clarke	B Lewis
N Clarke	S Maitland Thomas
L Desmond-Williams	J Manley
M Emmet-Lewis	J Perren
A Harris	J Pratt
B Jones	

TOWN CLERK: K Grabham
ASSISTANT TOWN CLERK: S Watkins

105. To receive apologies for absence

Apologies received from: Cllr's R Smith, M Rock, D Fussell

106. To receive Members' Declarations of Interest in respect of the business to be transacted.

Cllr	N Clarke	Item 5	Personal, Member of BCBC
Cllr	B Jones	Item 5	Personal, Member of BCBC
Cllr	M Clarke	Item 5	Personal, Member of BCBC
Cllr	S Maitland Thomas	Item 15(a)	Personal, aware of company SWWS having negotiations with employer

107. To confirm and sign minutes of Full Meeting of Council held on 9th September 2021

Resolved: **To approve the minutes of the Full Meeting of Council held on 9th September 2021 as a true and accurate record.**

108. To adjourn, if necessary to take Public Question Time

Two members of the public were present; however, no questions were raised.

109. Presentation from Nicola Bunston – Consultation, Engagements & Equalities Officer BCBC – Budget Consultation

The Mayor introduced Nicola Bunston, Consultation, Engagement & Equalities Officer, BCBC.

Nicola began her presentation by informing Members that the budget consultation has been running since 2013 and has achieved a balance taking in the views of the public for the BCBC budget. Following on from the success of previous budget consultations and back in 2018 the consultation team engaged with approximately 5,000 or more residents, reaching far more in the communities than previously done in the past. However, due to COVID pandemic in 2020 it proved difficult to interact face to face to deliver the consultation and members were either notified of the consultation only via post or via media sites. The impact of Covid-19 meant that in 2020 and 2021 we have had to deliver things very differently and are asking residents to support us in Shaping Bridgend's Future. It was advised that members of staff at BCBC are all still continuing to work from home.

Previous budget consultations have focused on specific service provisions, but this year BCBC want to engage with residents on a longer term vision for Bridgend County Borough. The focus will be on an engagement plan this year and focussing more on how BCBC have responded differently especially due to Covid-19 and how they can improve/prioritise on services going forward on the next 5-10 years recovering from the pandemic.

It was advised that 62 million in savings have been made in the last ten years, taking money from services to make cuts as money has not been available. To help Council and Cabinet to make decisions about future spending it is important to hear views from Town & Community Councils along with residents to ensure that we deliver effective and efficient services that are right for our communities. BCBC also actively engage with comprehensive schools, citizen's panel, BCBC Members and staff.

This year as part of this budget planning process BCBC want to hear your views on: performance over the past 12 months, support for Business, Tourism and the Economy, wellbeing, customer face-to-face access, digitalisation, investment in services, fees and charges, council tax levels and the future.

It was advised that some posters had been produced to promote the consultation and asks town and community councils to spread the word as widely as possible to ensure that as many people as possible get involved and are aware of the consultation.

Nicola advised that the deadline to submit the consultation response is on 14th November 2021 and that the Cabinet date for discussing the report at BCBC is on 14th December.

Cllr N Clarke thanked Nicola for her presentation, stated that it was important to engage with all people in the county borough and asked how visually impaired people were being engaged with. Nicola advised that BCBC recognise that there have been some barriers due to COVID for the visually impaired, however, members of the public can contact BCBC to assist with the completion of the form should they require any help. Cllr N Clarke then asked as to whether the consultation includes brail and it was advised that the document does not contain brail but could be provided if required.

Cllr B Jones gave thanks to Nicola and asked about the subsidies for the buses. Nicola advised that she is not aware as to whether the subsidies for the buses are going to be reinstated as they were removed in 2018, however, she would find out and report back to Cllr Jones.

Cllr L Desmond Williams thanked Nicola for her presentation and enquired as to how BCBC can ensure that the elderly residents or other residents who are not computer literate are not excluded from taking part in the consultation. Nicola advised that a contact telephone number is displayed on all the posters, media, newspaper's and that the radio campaign includes details on how members of the public can get in touch. Copies of the consultation could also be delivered to the Town Council offices so that members of public can collect a copy. Cllr L Desmond-Williams further asked as to whether a consultation letter could be posted to each household. Nicola advised that there were costs associated with the posting of consultation letters to each household, however, BCBC would perhaps look at this option next year.

Resolved: To note for information.

110. To receive update from a BCBC Member

Cllr B Jones advised that he was only bringing one update forward to Members which is that the contracts for Aldi have now been signed and planning permission has been submitted to BCBC.

Resolved: To note for information.

111. To receive update - One Voice Wales Conference

The Clerk advised that both herself and the Cllr T Hill had attended the One Voice Wales Conference and run through the topics/presentations that were included on the agenda for the meeting. It was mentioned that all the presentations were impressive and informative and informed Members that should they wish to have copies of the slides from the One Wales Conference meeting to contact the Clerk.

Resolved: To note for information.

112. To re-appoint committees and representatives

The Town Clerk read out the report and advised that this item has been brought forward as three new members had recently joined Porthcawl Town Council.

It was advised that the nominations can be agreed upon with the three new individual members and brought back to the next Full Council meeting on 11th November for consideration, and that representations would be needed by 4th November to be included on the agenda.

Cllr L Desmond-Williams requested a breakdown of each of the committees and details of the Members on them. The Town Clerk advised that she would circulate this information to Members.

113. To consider item - Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Draft Annual Report Consultation

Members were advised that this document is an annual report that Council receive which is in relation to remuneration payments for Councillors. The Town Clerk advised that she had printed off all the relevant pages from the document that are associated with Town & Community Councils.

It was advised that Council would need to include additional funds in the precepted budget if each Councillor wished to claim expenses for attending Council and committee meetings in the next financial year.

The Mayor suggested that a group of Councillors be set up to consider the report and agreed that it would be best for Members to respond individually. Members were informed that the deadline for the response from Members is 26th November.

The Clerk advised that she would forward the contact details to Members of whom to submit the individual responses to following the meeting.

114. To consider item – Newton Allotment Guidance

Cllr A Harris advised that she had attended along with Councillor's L Tallon-Morris and T Hill an appeals panel in relation to the eviction of some allotment holders. It was advised that they had read through the Tenancy Guidelines and found that they were not clear in places and open to some issues.

Members agreed that a small working group should be created to rewrite the guidelines to make them clearer.

Resolved: A small working group consisting of three Members Councillor's J Pratt, A Harris and R Lewis is set up to review guidelines and procedures especially in relation to the cultivation of weeds and warnings.

115. To consider item – Annual review of Newton Allotment Tenancy Fees 2022 (currently £15.00 for half plot and £30.00 for full plot)

Cllr J Pratt advised that on inspection of the Newton Allotments there are some remedial works that need to be completed on the site. It was agreed that it is the responsibility of the allotment holders to keep the space surrounding the allotment plots clear as this does not fall under the remit of the Council.

Resolved: For the allotment tenancy fees to remain the same for 2022 - £15.00 for half plot and £30.00 for full plot.

116. To consider item – Anti Corruption and Bribery Policy

The Town Clerk advised that this document had been presented to the Finance & Governance Committee for consideration and brought to Full Council for ratification.

Cllr B Jones enquired as to what this policy is for. The Town Clerk advised that the Anti-Corruption and Bribery Policy is a document that each Council should have in place.

Resolved: To adopt the Anti-Corruption and Bribery Policy.

117. To consider item - Financial Regulations Update

Resolved: To adopt the Financial Regulations as presented.

118. To approve Virement from Event Sponsorship to Christmas Fund – Cllr S Maitland Thomas

Cllr S Maitland Thomas proposed that a transfer of £10,000 from the event sponsorship be made to the Christmas fund, and that any monies not used transferred back to the event sponsorship budget.

It was advised that any Christmas Activities will be planned subject to COVID and the suggested events for Covid secure activities included a winter wanderland, Christmas advent calendar to encourage people to shop locally, Christmas card competition and a lantern parade etc.

Resolved: To approve virement of the amount of £10,000 from the budget for the Event Sponsorship to Christmas Fund with the proviso that any monies not used is returned to the Event Sponsorship Fund.

119. Town Clerk Reports

a) Payments for Authorisation

The Clerk introduced the report and sought the council's approval to make the payments as listed in appendix a.

Resolved: For payments to be made as per appendix a.

Members agreed to go into a closed session. (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, in view of the confidential nature of the about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public are excluded from the next agenda items.

b) Internal Auditor

The Town Clerk advised that the appointment of the internal audit was for the current financial year 2021/22, and that Internal Auditors are usually appointed on a yearly basis.

Cllr J Manley asked to be noted that she abstained from voting.

Cllr N Clarke asked to be noted that she voted against this item.

Resolved: To accept the quote of £600 and appoint Mr Ian Hughes as the Internal Auditor 2021/2022.

c) Porthcawl Hub

The Town Clerk advised that BCBC had asked Council as to whether we wish to renew the lease or not which would determine as to whether or not we undertake the floor repairs on the Porthcawl Hub. The building will be marked for demolition in the next two years if we do not renew the lease.

Cllr B Jones advised that the Porthcawl Hub building is beyond repair, unsafe, and the floor has rotted away making the building un-usable.

Members were reminded that the Operations Committee did recommend not to repair the floor and to enquire whether BCBC would lease the hub to the Veterans which was declined. Veterans are currently using the bowling pavilion and are happy with the location.

Cllr M Clarke advised that as Council had signed an Armed Force Covenant we should looking positively how the Veterans can be supported.

Following discussion:-

Cllr S Maitland Thomas asked to be noted that he did not vote on this item.

Resolved: That as the portacabin is at the end of its life that Porthcawl Town Council do not renew the lease for the Porthcawl Community Hub.

Resolved: That through committee Council continues working and engaging with the Veterans and to explore positively into how the Veterans can be supported in the town – to place this item on the next Full Council agenda for discussion.

d) Recruitment

The Assistant Town Clerk left the meeting whilst this item was being discussed.

The Clerk talked members through the recruitment report which was seeking Councils permission to recruit for a Deputy Town Clerk.

Following a lengthy discussion a recorded vote was requested.

For:- Cllr M Chegwen, Cllr M Emmet-Lewis, Cllr A Harris, Cllr R Lee, Cllr R Lewis, Cllr J Manley, Cllr J Pratt.

Against:- Cllr L Desmond-Williams, Cllr M Clarke, Cllr B Jones

Abstained:- Cllr N Clarke, Cllr S Maitland Thomas

The Town Clerk also advised members that the recruitment for the Facilities Manager as agreed at Full Council meeting on the 29th July has taken place and a suitable candidate has been found to fill the position.

Resolved: To recruit for a Deputy Town Clerk.

Resolved: For One Voice Wales to undertake the recruitment as per the costs as detailed in the report.

Resolved: For the suitable candidate to be offered the Facilities Manager Position.

Meeting concluded at 9.20pm