

PORTHCAWL TOWN COUNCIL



MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD (ELECTRONICALLY) ON THURSDAY 29th June 2021

PRESENT:

COUNCILLORS:

T Hill

M Chegwen

M Clarke

N Clarke

L Desmond-Williams

M Emmet-Lewis

A Harris

B Jones

R Lee

B Lewis

S Maitland Thomas

J Manley

J Pratt

M Rock

L Tallon-Morris

TOWN CLERK: K Grabham

ASSISTANT TOWN CLERK: S Watkins

Cllr T Hill welcomed Cllr M Rock the new Councillor for Newton Ward.

52. To receive apologies for absence

Cllr R Smith

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

Cllr J Manley – Item 5e – Personal Interest

54. To confirm and sign minutes of the Meeting of Council held on the 10th June 2021

Resolved: To approve the minutes of the meeting of Council held on the 10th June 2021 as a true and accurate record.

55. To consider item – Granting Plenary Powers to Staffing Committee for decisions in relation to Staff Wellbeing

Cllr Chegwen informed members that at the last staffing committee, the committee were informed that the Council currently does not have any arrangements in place to deal with staff wellbeing, confidentially or items of a personal nature. Staffing committee are therefore seeking Council to grant plenary powers which will enable the Staffing Committee to deal with such issues as they arise.

Resolved: To grant plenary powers to Staffing Committee for decisions relating to staff wellbeing.

56. Town Clerk Reports

a) Internal Audit Report for the financial year 2020-2021

The Clerk introduced the report and informed members that the purpose of the report is to inform members of the results of the internal audit for 2020/2021.

The Clerk informed members that Council had failed on four of the eleven annual return internal audit objectives resulting in 27 recommendations being made.

The Clerk drew attention to recommendations 23-25 made by the internal auditor as a decision is required on these recommendations before the Annual Return can be submitted.

Recommendations 23 – 25 on the internal audit report state:-

R23. Members should instruct the Clerk/RFO to enter the media screens on the Council's Fixed Asset Register, showing the one installed screen as 'on loan from' the date installed to the date that the Credu Charity was placed into receivership.

R24. Members should take all reasonable efforts to recover the property of the Council.

R25. The Fixed Asset Register value stated for the 2020-21 financial year should be updated to include the net cost of the media screens as recorded on the Council's original sales invoice, and the Account Statements updated, before the onward transmission of the Annual Return to the External Auditor.

A member highlighted the date error contained on page 10. The Clerk informed council that this will be amended prior to the report being published on the website.

Resolved: Council notes the contents of the Internal Audit Report

Resolved: Council accepts the 27 recommendations made in the Internal Audit Report

Resolved: That members instruct the Clerk/RFO to enter the media screens on the council's Fixed Asset Register, showing the one installed as 'on loan from Porthcawl Town Council' to the date that Credu Charity was placed into receivership

Resolved: Members should take all reasonable efforts to recover the property of the Council.

Resolved: The Fixed Asset Register value for the 2020-21 financial year should be updated to include the net costs of the media screens as recorded on the Council's original sales invoice and the Account Statements be updated, prior to the onward submission of the Annual Return to the External Auditor.

Cllr N Clarke & Cllr M Clarke did not vote on the last three resolved items concerning the Media Screens.

57. 5b) Annual Accounts and Annual Return for the Financial Year 2020-2021

The Clerk introduced the report and informed members that permission is sought to sign off the annual accounts and the annual return for the financial year 2020-2021

A member queried how £9,346.00 had been spent on events while in lockdown. The Clerk informed the member that the amount was due to the Drive in Cinema Event.

A member queried who signs the Annual Return, the Clerk informed the member that once the annual return is approved by Council it is signed by the Clerk/RFO and the Chair of the Council. The Annual return is also signed by the Internal Auditor

Resolved: Council approves the Annual Accounts for the Financial Year 2020-2021

Resolved: Council approves the completion of the Annual Return for the Financial Year 2020-2021

58 5c) Reserve Allocation

The Clerk introduced the report and explained to members that Town Councils are required to maintain adequate financial reserves to meet the needs of the Council.

The earmarked reserves are to be reallocated, creating two new earmarked reserves funds. One for Staffing and Recruitment which would hold £55,000.00 and one for Christmas Lights which would hold £10,000.00

A member queried the amount of Earmarked Reserves held in the Newton Nottage Road Project. The Clerk informed the member that this was the reported amount included in the 2019-2020 accounts.

A member asked the Clerk why £55,000.00 was being put in Staffing & Recruitment. The Clerk explained that proposals contained in report 5d linked to this report and wanted to ensure that prior to proposing report 5d that the relevant funding was in place.

A member queried the Christmas Light Fund of £10,000.00 and stated that it should be £20,000.00. The Clerk explained that there is already £25,000.00 in the current budget for this year and the earmark reserve fund has been created to top up the £25,000.00 should it be required.

Resolved: Council approve the reallocation of the reserves as detailed in report 5c.

59. 5d) Recruitment of Staff, Job Descriptions and Job Evaluation

The Clerk introduced the report and explained to members that the recommendations made by Staffing Committee concerning recruitment of staff, job descriptions and job evaluation require ratification from Council.

A member thanked the Clerk for bringing the report forward and agreed that the correct structure does need to be in place. They queried the costs associated with the roles and referred to recommendation 17 in the internal auditor's report which states that all projects must be fully costed prior to implementation.

The Clerk explained the process would be for the jobs to be evaluated, this, in turn would provide the salary scales which will enable a fully costed report to be brought back to Staffing Committee and to Full Council. There will be no implementation of changes without full Councils consent.

Resolved: To approve the job descriptions as detailed

Resolved: To approve for the four job descriptions to be evaluated by One Voice Wales for £450.00

Resolved: To agree the proposed changes to the Staffing Structure.

60. 5e) Naturequest – Grant Application

The Clerk introduced the report and informed members of the recommendation made by Promoting Porthcawl Committee not to support the grant application, based on insufficient information being provided and that no other Town or Community Council in the borough has been approached to provide match funding.

Resolved: To approve the recommendation made by Promoting Porthcawl not to support the grant application.

61. 5f) Computer Equipment

The Clerk informed members of the need to purchase new laptops for the office. The laptops currently in use are over 5 years old.

A member queried if H&S risk assessments have been carried out for the staff working from home. The Clerk advised members that they currently have not conducted the working from home risk assessment and these would be arranged.

Resolved: For 4 laptops at the cost of £2848.60 to be purchased, 2 be ordered with immediate effect and for the other 2 be purchased once the new staffing structure is in place.

Resolved: To extend the warranty for 5 years at the cost of £63.00 per computer.

The meeting concluded at 7.53pm