

PORTHCAWL TOWN COUNCIL



MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD (ELECTRONICALLY) ON THURSDAY 16th NOVEMBER 2021

PRESENT:

COUNCILLORS: T Hill

M Chegwen	B Lewis
M Clarke	J Manley
L Desmond-Williams	R Lee
M Emmet-Lewis	S Maitland Thomas
D Fussell	J Perren
A Harris	M Rock
B Jones	L Tallon-Morris

TOWN CLERK: K Grabham

ASSISTANT TOWN CLERK: S Watkins

132. To receive apologies for absence

Apologies received from: Cllr's R Smith, J Pratt and N Clarke

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

None received.

134. To consider item – Q2 Financial Reports

The Clerk advised that this item is for the Quarter 2 reports until the end of September.

Following discussion: -

Resolved: To approve the Q2 Financial Reports as presented.

135. To consider item – Bank Reconciliations July – September 2021

The Clerk advised that this item is bringing the bank reconciliations forward for Q2 of which includes a report from the software system and the corresponding bank statements, and can be clearly seen from these documents that the reconciliations tally.

Cllr L Desmond-Williams advised that Members are not seeing the full bank reconciliations and budget situations on each agenda for Full Council as previously done when the previous Clerk was in situ. The Clerk advised that this is the first time that this has been brought to her attention and that discussions have previously been held with Cllr L Desmond-Williams bringing budget reports to each of the committees which will now be done going forward. Also, as noted in the internal Audit Report at least every quarter you should bring forward your financial positions and your bank reconciliations to Council for verification. The Clerk also advised that she does not understand the comment as to why Members cannot see full bank reconciliations because this is all done via the software that Council use and can clearly be seen that the reconciliations balance.

Following discussion:-

Resolved: To approve the Bank Reconciliations July – September 2021.

136. To consider item – Projected year end balances 2021/2022

The Clerk advised that this is a report that has come forward from the software system. It looks at what Council have spent during the year and also illustrates the projected figures going forward.

Cllr M Clarke asked if he is correct in seeing on the document that the outturn spends are £404,297 against a budget of £435,000. The Clerk confirmed that it is currently the projected outturn, however, this amount could alter depending on different items that come in during the remainder of this year.

Following discussion:-

Resolved: To approve the Projected year end balances 2021/2022.

137. For discussion – 2021/2022 budget

The Clerk advised that she was asked to bring this item forward due to some questions raised from Councillors.

Resolved: To note this item for information.

Cllr M Clarke left the meeting at 7.16pm

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.

138. For information – 2021/2022 Staff Salaries Budget

The Clerk explained that it was resolved at the Full Council meeting held on 29th June 2021 to re-allocate £55,000 from our earmarked reserved fund for the recruitment of staff. At the end of the financial year, last year, Council had a general reserve fund and had some funds earmarked in the earmarked reserves and the Clerk had sought permission from Full Council to re-designate the earmarked reserved funds of which was approved by Full Council. Therefore, this has allowed Council to have the budget to recruit for the two positions that Council are currently looking into. The Clerk advised that included in the documents presented with the agenda for this item it illustrates the full costs including pensions and National Insurance contributions for the Facilities Manager position and also full costings for a Deputy Town Clerk recruitment, both costs for a full year. However, it was explained that due to the time of year that Council are recruiting the costs provided will be on a pro-rata basis.

The Clerk advised that the new Facilities Manager has been recruited and commenced employment on Monday (15th November) meaning that Council need to pro-rata the salary costs. The Clerk provided the pro-rata costs for five months for the Facilities Manager to Members.

The Clerk advised that discussions had been held with One Voice Wales, as approved by Council, that we would recruit through One Voice Wales for the Deputy Town Clerk position. A meeting is scheduled with the Staffing Members and One Voice Wales in the first week of December to progress this item. One Voice Wales had advised that they will not possibly start the recruitment until January, therefore Council could potentially have someone in place in February or March depending on the notice that needs to be given in their current employment. The Clerk ran through the pro-rata figures.

The Clerk advised that the earmarked reserves funds do not need permission to carry them forward. The earmarked reserves can be held for five years, and as long as they are used within the five years Council can exhaust the fund by obtaining Council permission or re-designate the fund within that period. The remaining balance of £35,118.72 would be used to offset against the budget in the 2022/2023 financial year.

Following discussion:-

Resolved: To note for information.

139. For information – 2022/2023 staff salaries budget

The Clerk advised that the NJC in the report is the National Joint Council and they are responsible for setting the salary spinal point scales that are awarded on to local government employees. Each year the NJC negotiate a salary increase and they are currently still in negotiations with the Trade Unions and the Joint Council because the Trade Unions have requested an increase of 10% and additional items to support Mental Well-Being and additional extra leave etc. The NJC are not in agreement with the increase and have made an offer of 1.75% of which has not been agreed and are encouraging Members of staff to go on strike. The Clerk advised that the reasoning behind bringing this issue to the attention of Members is that the figures presented for the salaries are based on the 2020/2021 spinal point scales as they have not yet released the salary scales for 2021/2022 of which has been explained in the report.

Cllr L Desmond-Williams advised that she had previously asked the chair of the staffing committee to have the projected income and expenditure details for salaries.

Cllr A Harris asked for the Clerk to verify that the salaries given are the ones with the extra one salary scale added on and that we are waiting on the percentage uplift. The Clerk advised that it is correct and was agreed by Council and implemented to accept the recommendations made by One Voice Wales that staff would be paid on an incremental scale as opposed to a fixed point. This incremental scale means that you have a banding between two salary scale points and you will increase up the banding until you reach the top of the scale. This is the case for each employee that they have been put up to the next salary scale banding within their relevant banding for their post.

Following discussion, it was advised that there will be future and further meetings held in order to have the opportunity for Members to discuss the projected budgets for 2022/23.

Cllr M Chegwen gave thanks to the Town Clerk for issuing a comprehensive breakdown of the salaries that Cllr L Desmond-Williams had requested.

Councillors L Desmond-Williams and B Jones left the meeting at 7.40pm.

The Mayor, Cllr T Hill gave thanks to the Town Clerk for all her hard work putting this information together for Members.

Resolved: To note for information.

Meeting concluded at 7.42 pm