

**MINUTES OF THE POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD
ON 28TH. JANUARY 2019**

Present: Councillor A Short (Chair)
Councillor D Davies (Vice Chair)
Councillors A Farina-Childs, Edwards, G James, R Mills & Z Hammond

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillors T Evans & P Cook

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest made at this point

3. To Receive the Minutes of the Policy & Finance Committee Meeting held on 12th. November 2018

It was *resolved* the minutes be received

4. Matters Arising

There were no matter arising

5. To Consider Applications for Financial Assistance

The Clerk reported that he had received one application from Blackwood 1st. Brownies, who were requesting assistance to enable them to introduce a new programme which delivers a varied range of activities, new skills and topics to broaden the girls horizons.

After some discussion, members *agreed to recommend* to Town Council that the sum of £250 be awarded to Blackwood 1st. Brownies

6. To Consider Request for Additional £5,000 Interest Free Loan from Blackwood Little Theatre

The Clerk circulated the request from Blackwood Little Theatre for an additional £5,000 interest free loan to enable works to be undertaken to secure the safety and future of the building – moisture entering the walls of the theatre on the side of the building adjacent to the houses after much of the rendering fell off (together with guttering and down pipe)

The Clerk reported that the current loan of £10,000 was due for repayment later this year, and that repayments were regular and in line with our current agreement.

After some discussion, members ***agreed to recommend*** to Town Council that an additional Interest Free Loan of £5,000 be made to enable the works to be undertaken. It was also ***agreed*** to recommend the terms of this loan be pro-rata to the existing loan ie. monthly payments of £50 plus quarterly payments of £250 with a final payment of £450.

7. Budget Monitoring Report - Period 9 to 31st. December 2018

The Clerk presented his budget monitoring report for the current year which indicated a number of variances to the original budget, resulting in an anticipated net effect of an over spend of £4,881 meaning £3,949 being taken from balances as opposed to £932 put into balances as originally planned (albeit £7,100 in respect of Community Garden is included in figures).

A previous decision that this be funded via Community Infrastructure Levy & Reserves means overall, that this gives Town Council the opportunity to identify an amount of £1,000 towards our Bi Centenary Celebrations.

It was ***unanimously agreed to recommend*** to Town Council that the Budget monitoring report as presented be accepted, and that £1,000 is earmarked to reserves towards planned Bi Centenary Celebrations

8. Budget Requirements 2019/2020 & Precept Setting

The Clerk presented a budget which reflected current spending patterns, plus inflationary increases on some expenditure heads, but also reflects the Council's decision to continue the provision of hanging baskets, continued sponsorship of the Blackwood RFC Firework Display and the ongoing Events Programme and our Grants to Voluntary Organisations. A contribution of £2,000 is also included towards Replacement fund for Christmas Lighting.

The cessation of the Children's Literature Festival gives Town Council the opportunity to start earmarking necessary funds to enable celebrations to be planned for the Bi Centenary during 2020.

Furthermore, with the information that Caerphilly C.B.C. (due to budgetary constraints) will no longer be running the Beach Party, it is proposed an additional £2,000 be allocated to the Carnival this year (over and above the £6,000 budget originally requested by the Events Committee). It is also proposed that the £1,500 identified as Contributions towards C.C.B.C. Events be now reallocated to the Carnival/ Beach Party One Day Event.

With the Borough now likely, after our request, to consider the Christmas Market as a One Day Event, we may after further discussions with the Borough officers look to vire monies from the £2,750 currently allocated to the Christmas Market/Fair.

After some discussion it was ***unanimously agreed to recommend*** to Town Council the budget as presented and that the Precept for 2019/2020 remain at £20 per Band Property.

Prior to the close of the meeting the Clerk outlined his intention to arrange flowers for the funeral of Councillor Darren Jones father who sadly died last week, and also to forward a donation of £50 in lieu of flowers to Velindre in respect of our friend and former colleague Steffan Lewis. Members present were in full agreement.

