

## **MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & POLICY COMMITTEE HELD ON 18<sup>TH</sup>. JULY 2022**

Present : Cllr. G Edwards ( Mayor )  
Cllrs. D Davies, K Etheridge, P Cook & K Williams

### ***1. Appoint a Chair & Vice Chair of the Committee***

It was proposed by Cllr K Etheridge & seconded by Cllr. G Edwards that Cllr. K Williams be appointed Chair of the Committee. This as ***agreed*** by all present.

It was proposed by Cllr K Etheridge & seconded by Cllr. G Edwards that Cllr.P Cook be appointed Vice - Chair of the Committee. This as ***agreed*** by all present.

### ***2. Apologies for Absence***

Apologies for Absence were received from Cllrs. S Wareham, R Mills & L Phillips

### ***3. Declarations of Interest***

Declarations of Interest was made by Cllr. G Edwards in respect of item 10 on the Agenda as Chair of the Caerphilly Taxi Drivers Association and responsible for running of Toilets at the Bus Station

### ***4. To Receive the Minutes of the Policy & Finance Committee Meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup>. January 2022***

It was ***resolved*** the minutes be agreed as a true record

### ***5. To Consider Applications for Financial Assistance***

The Clerk reported only two applications were for discussion this evening, as the form had not been returned by Cefn Fforest Jazz Band, and one was due to be forwarded to Cefn Fforest Institute.

He also reported that he had forwarded details of the Welsh Government CADW Historic Buildings Grant to both Libanus Lifestyle Centre & Cefn Fforest Institute, and both had intimated they would be progressing on that front.

Members then deliberated on the two applications, and after careful consideration decided to recommend to Town Council that –

In respect of Libanus Lifestyles application no grant be made bearing in mind that £550 had been donated to a previous project at the end of March.

In respect of Blackwood Cricket Club, a grant of £250 be made in support of the Youth Teams at the Club and a further £250 in recognition of the Community Event organised by Emma Chalk, Sam and others in respect of the Queens Platinum Jubilee - £500 in total

**6. To Consider levels of payment for Travel Costs/ Overnight Subsistence/ Financial Loss Compensation**

The Clerk presented his report, and after much discussion and deliberation it was **agreed** to recommend the following to Town Council

Travelling expenses – To apply the HMRC mileage allowance of 45p per mile on approved duties outside the Caerphilly County Borough boundary or actual costs of public transport ( 2<sup>nd</sup>. Class rail fare ).

Subsistence - For approved duties that requires an overnight stay an allowance of up £28 per 24 hour period allowance for meals incl. breakfast where not provided, with receipts required as proof

Financial Loss - For approved duties financial loss compensation of £10 per hour can be claimed where such loss can be proved to have occurred

**7. To Consider New Application Form for Financial Assistance**

Cllr. G Edwards presented the proposed new Application Form, and after some deliberation it was **agreed** the Mayor and Clerk amend this proposed form to include elements of the existing form namely –

Details of total no. of members / no. of members who reside in Town Council area

Details of total no. of beneficiaries of organisations services/ no. who reside in Town Council area

Details of how funded together with a copy of previous years financial accounts, incl. balance sheet/ bank statement balances for established organisations. Not so for newly formed organisations

And then recommend same to Town Council

**8. To Consider Members of the Public Speaking Protocol for Council Meetings**

Cllr. G Edwards presented the report, and after some discussion it was **agreed** to recommend same to Town Council

**9. To Consider whether in drafting our Training Plan that some sessions should be considered as being compulsory especially for new members eg. Code of Conduct**

The Clerk presented his report which questioned when drafting the Training Plan whether we should consider making some sessions/modules compulsory eg. Code of Conduct (which is compulsory to all Caerphilly C.B.C. members).

The Clerk identified a number of courses which One Voice Wales considers as essential for new members, and some that would possibly also benefit more seasoned members

New Councillor Induction  
Code of Conduct  
The Council  
The Councillor  
The Council as an Employer  
Understanding the Law  
The Council Meeting  
Local Government Finance

After some discussion, when Cllrs. G Edwards & K Williams advised the meeting that they had recently undertaken some training sessions with One Voice Wales and found them well presented and informative, it was **agreed** to recommend to Town Council that whilst only Code of Conduct training should be compulsory, the others are highly recommended, so that both new and existing members are better equipped with a high degree of knowledge, understanding and skills, which will enable them to carry out their role as a town council member more effectively.

**10. To discuss Quotation received from Healthmatic in sum of £3,557.00 to enable Disabled Toilet facilities at Bus Station or £4,282 ( plus £725 ) as an option for contactless**

Cllr. G Edwards having declared an interest in this matter left the meeting and took no part in the discussion or decision taking.

Members were conscious that having assisted the Caerphilly Taxi Drivers Association to re-open the toilets for the benefit of the townspeople and visitors, there may well be a responsibility on us as a public body to ultimately provide disabled facilities. This being an anomaly, since whilst the Borough negated any responsibility to provide any public toilets in the town ( other than presumably those at the library & B.M.I. ), we may now have a responsibility placed on us to provide disabled facilities.

Members had obvious sympathy around this contentious issue, but considered that with the ongoing anti social behaviour problems in and around the bus station, and the significant damage caused to the current facilities over the past year or so, perhaps now is not the right time to consider investing more monies, and it was **agreed** to recommend to Town Council this matter be deferred for at least 6 months to see if the situation improves

**11. To Receive Budget Monitoring Report for Period to 30<sup>th</sup>. June 2022**

The Clerk presented his report, which identified actual expenditure to 30<sup>th</sup> June, together with a projected out-turn for the current year based on updated information regarding decisions taken by Town Council – increased Mayors Allowance, additional costs relating to hanging baskets and Summer Event ( Beach Party ) and virement of Election Costs to Grants to Local Organisations.

After some discussion, the Report was **agreed** by members

The Clerk informed members that a further report will be presented to the September meeting

