

DRAFT

MINUTES OF THE POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 18th. JUNE 2025

Present: Cllr. K Williams (Chair)
Cllrs. G Etheridge, C Erasmus & N Dix

Also in attendance Cllr. K Etheridge

1. *Apologies for Absence*

Apologies for Absence were received from Cllrs. D. Box, R Mills, C Clark, D Davies & J Griffiths

2. *Declarations of Interest*

There were no Declarations of Interest

3. *To Appoint Vice Chair of this Committee*

It was agreed this be discussed at the next meeting, when hopefully more members will be in attendance

4. *To Receive the Minutes of the Policy & Finance Committee Meeting held 13th. May 2025*

It was unanimously agreed the Minutes be received

5. *Applications for Financial Assistance*

The Clerk reported on two applications received for financial assistance, namely -

Blackwood Bowls Club & Bravehearts

Copies of the Applications had been forwarded to members prior to the meeting, and both were considered in turn.

After due consideration it was ***agreed*** to recommend to Town Council that a grant of £250 be awarded to Blackwood Bowls Club to assist in the purchase of new Jacks & Mats (totalling £432) and a grant of £100 be awarded to Bravehearts to assist in the purchase of new Dumbells (£187)

6. *Financial Accounts 2024/2025 together with Internal Audit Report & Annual Return for the Year Ended 31st. March 2025*

The Clerk reminded members that he had presented the Provisional Out –turn and Annual Return for Year Ended 31st. March 2025 to the AGM on 6th. May, whilst also identifying the fact that two new questions had been added to the Governance Statement which would need consideration.

The Clerk took members through the Annual Governance Statements and considered each in turn. After some discussion, members agreed that this Committee should recommend they were confident that Statements 2- 10 could be answered positively whilst Statement 11 regarding Trust Funds was not applicable.

With regards Statement 1

In consultation with the community we have developed a vision and purpose for the Council and used this vision to inform the Council's plans, budget and activities.

Currently would consider recommend answering No

Whilst our Strategic Plan is identified within our Annual Reports, we did not during Covid actually consult the community on same.

The majority of the Plan is still relevant, and with a few minor amendments could be posted for consultation with the community on the website/ facebook page and open days at the Council Offices in town. However, with the Borough Council currently consulting on their Placemaking Plans for Blackwood, members believe it prudent to perhaps wait for the outcome of that exercise before amending/ finalising our document and consult on same.

This does, however, form one of our priorities within the 2025/26 Annual Plan

The Annual Governance Statement is, therefore, recommended for ***approved and acceptance***.

Members then received the Annual Internal Audit Report and after a brief discussion ***resolved it be approved and accepted***

The Annual Return will now be presented to Town Council at a Special Meeting to be held on Wednesday 25th. June, and if accepted signed by the Mayor on behalf of Town Council and submitted to the external auditors together with all supplementary information requested by the required date of 8th. August 2025

The necessary Notice of Appointment of Date for the Exercise of Electors Rights was posted on our Web Page and Notice board as directed by Audit Wales on Monday 16th. June, with the period from 1st. July to 28th. July inclusive identified as the public inspection period.

7. To Consider Adoption of Model Standing Orders

The Clerk reported that he had finalised the proposed Model Standing Orders in close liaison with the Mayor and had forwarded copies to members of this Committee for their deliberation.

He explained briefly that model standing orders in bold print were legal and statutory requirements, and could not therefore be amended. The remainder were designed to help to help councils operate effectively and could, therefore, be amended to suit a council's needs.

He requested members read over same and get back to him with any queries, and this was agreed.

It was planned to forward to all members for adoption at the Special Meeting on 25th. June

8. To Consider Adoption of Model Financial Regulations

Similarly the Clerk reported that he had finalised the proposed Model Financial Regulations in liaison with the Mayor, and that they were meeting tomorrow to double check things prior to forwarding same to Committee members for their deliberation.

He again explained that bold print indicated legal requirements which councils cannot change or suspend. For the rest, it was a matter of each council adapting the model to suit its size and structure.

In the setting of financial limits it was acknowledged this was challenging, and that each council needs to determine its own limits, that help, rather than hinder, its operations.

Bearing this in mind the Clerk reported that very similar limits to those included in our current Financial Regulations had been proposed.

Again he requested members to read through the document, and get back to him with any queries, and that again it was planned to forward to all members for adoption at the Special Meeting

9. To Consider Adoption of Press Policy (possibly part of updated Social Media Policy) & Other

The Mayor reported that with assistance from One Voice Wales he had identified several additional Policies that Town Council ideally should have in place, and had produced same for members consideration over the coming weeks/months