



Blackwood Town Council

Draft Minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee Meeting Held at 6.30pm on Monday 27th April at 6.30pm at Blackwood Town Council Offices

Present

Cllr Dix (Chair) Cllr C Erasmus, Cllr D Davies,

Digital attendance - Cllr G Etheridge, Cllr D Box

Clerk M Betts, Deputy Clerk R Davies

1. To receive Apologies for Absence.

Apologies received from Cllr R Mills, Cllr Jan Griffiths

Absent Cllr Clark

2. To receive Declarations of Interests or dispensations on any item(s) on this agenda, if appropriate.

Councillors and Officers are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interest(s) in respect of any item of business on this agenda in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000, and the Code of Conduct for both Councillors and Officers.

None received.

3. To Approve the Minutes of the Policy and Finance Meeting held on 16th February 2026.

Resolved that the minutes are an accurate record of proceedings.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes –

The items below have already been resolved but not reported on due to the cancellation of the last meeting.

- Audit Office Response – the decision of the original audit has been overturned due to the Town Council challenge of several points. It has now been classified as unqualified. The additional questions the town council put forward have not yet been responded to.
- Insurance quotes – the clerk had been asked to find an additional quote for comparison but reported that the alternative company contacted stated they were unable to match the quote received from our current supplier Zurich.
- Training Document – the terms had been discussed in a previous meeting, and it was resolved that the policy will now go to full council for approval.



- Photocopier purchase – all Councillors were circulated with details of the purchase and purchase was agreed, the photocopier is now in place and working well.

5. Applications for Financial Assistance

The decision to grant the application for financial assistance for the Cricket Club was deferred so that more information could be sought. The town council was concerned that the club was holding a large amount of reserves in their accounts. The clerk clarified that further information identified the money the club had was an inflated figure due to a grant they had received and not a true reflection. The information submitted on the application form was shared, and the TC agreed that they would recommend to the full council that they would contribute £240 to purchase the new helmets as these are a health and safety requirement under new legislation. The council will specify that the funds are only used for this purpose.

6. To receive and approve a change of policy

Three documents were presented to the councillors. Following advice from One Voice Wales, the structure of financial assistance is to be revised. A set of more stringent rules will be introduced into the policy. The council has requested that the clerk/deputy clerk advise on a set budget that the council is able to afford specifically for financial assistance to local community groups.

The grant applications will be open twice a year for a period of four weeks. A new organisation applying for financial assistance will only be awarded a maximum of £250, established organisations can apply for amounts up to £1000. The applicants will have to show how they have raised funds for the initiative. The policy stipulates that they should find 25% of the cost. If they can't demonstrate this, the application will still be considered, but they need to explain what steps they have taken to raise the money.

Dependent on the amount of budget allocated, the maximum grant would be £1000 but the maximum does not have to be given; council will decide what amount is awarded.

The organisations applying must benefit the Blackwood wards. Generally, an organisation can only apply once a financial year, however a second application will be considered, if the organisation can demonstrate it is for a different project. The council's decision is final, and there is no route of appeal. The clerk shared the amount that has been granted over the last few years. It was requested that the clerks study the budget and decide on an amount that can be allocated to this area and bring this back to the Annual Meeting.

Resolved - Recommended the policy is passed to the Town Council for approval, but new budgetary information needs to be part of this.

7. Payments List – for approval –

The gas bill has been paid twice in error, but we are now approximately £170 in credit for the next bill.



The NNDR bill is on the list twice but we have not paid twice as it is paid by direct debit.

Resolved – the payments were approved.

8. Finance and Governance Toolkit – for information and decisions on a way forward.

Recommended that this is delayed to a June meeting. The clerk outlined the purpose and format of the document. It will be circulated to Councillors in advance.

It was recommended that the document be completed section by section in subsequent Policy and Finance meetings so that all staff and councillors can be confident that the finance and governance systems in place are robust and transparent and any areas needing improvement can be identified.

Resolved to agenda for June Policy and Finance Meeting

9. Date of Next Meetings:

Annual Council, Monday 11th May 6.30pm, Town Council Offices.

Policy and Finance Committee, 18th May 6.30pm, Town Council Offices

Signed

Councillor N Dix (Chair)

Date: