** CAERPHILLY CYNGOR**

 **TOWN TREF**

 **COUNCIL CAERFFILI**

**TOWN CLERK: TOWN MAYOR**

**CLERK Y DREF MEIR Y DREF**

**Phil Davy Cllr Mike Prew**

**MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF CAERPHILLY TOWN COUNCIL**

**HELD BY REMOTE ACCESS ON MONDAY 18TH MAY 2020**

**Present:**

Councillors P J Bevan, C Elsbury, S Kent, J Hibbert, J Grenfell, M Prew, S Hodder, H Jackson,

S Morgan, J Fussell, J Pritchard

**Apologies:**

Councillor R Bidgood

**In Attendance:**

P G Davy, Town Clerk

**108 MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 16TH MARCH**

**2020**

Minutes of the Ordinary Town Council Meeting held on 16th March were received and confirmed. Minutes will be signed by the Town Mayor when practical.

**109 MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising.

**110 TOWN CLERK’ REPORTS**

1 Q4 Budget Monitoring (2019/20 Financial Year)

Expenditure to 31.3.20 was £131,295 a 16% increase on the original budget. The increase was largely due to the CIL projects that were not part of the original budget, and the purchase of a new multi function printer.

The report was noted.

2 Annual Return for the Year Ended 31st March 2020

The Town Clerk presented the Annual Return. The main variances between 2018/19 and 2019/20 were outlined. The additional information requested by the external auditor was noted. There were no issues raised during the internal audit.

It was resolved to approve the Annual Return, which includes the accounting statements, the annual governance statement, and the internal audit report. Arrangements will be made for the Town Mayor to sign the Annual Return on behalf of the Town Council as soon as practical, and the Annual Return and requested supporting documents will then be submitted to the external auditor.

3 Insurance Renewal

The Town Council’s insurance is due for renewal on 1st June 2020. The Town Council has entered a three year agreement which runs to 31st May 2022 via brokers Came and Company. The increase in the premium was explained and it was noted that the insurer was imposing various policy changes including the coronavirus exclusion.

It was resolved to renew the policy for 2020/21 via Came and Company at the annual premium of £1684-55.

**111 CORONAVIRUS EPIDEMIC**

Specific matters affecting the Town Council were discussed

1 Town Council Office and Employees

As an employer the Town Council has a legal responsibility to protect workers and visitors from risk to their health and safety. This now includes the risk of COVID-19.

Welsh Government advice remains that everyone should work from home, unless this is impracticable. Members agreed that it was not feasible to reopen the office for the foreseeable future and homeworking arrangements need to be reviewed in respect of IT, telephone, and communication with Administrative Assistant.

2 Town Council Meetings

Workplace guidance advocates use of remote working tools to avoid in person meetings. Some members fall in the clinically vulnerable group of people due to age where the current and continuing guidance is to stay at home as much as possible and to minimise contact with others outside their household.

The Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Meetings) (Wales) Regulations 2020 make provision for remote attendance at meetings until end of April 2021.

Members agreed that face to face meetings would not be possible for some months and the Town Council should take out a subscription for a suitable video conferencing platform and this should be included in the IT review.

3 Events

As steps are taken to ease the lockdown restrictions this will be subject to social distancing requirements. Events that attract large crowds will not be likely for some time and raises questions whether the annual fireworks display, Christmas Lights switch on, and Lantern Parade will have to be cancelled. It was agreed that a final decision should be made in July based on the prevailing circumstances at that time.

4 Budget

Savings have already arisen due to the cancellation of the Flower Festival, Food Festival, and Big Cheese. Further savings will arise if the fireworks display, Christmas Lights switch on, and Lantern Parade are cancelled. It was noted that the town centre floral decorations will be proceeding, and the hanging baskets and planters should be appearing around the end of May.

The budget savings can be used to build up reserves for future years, to hold the precept at the current level for 2021/22 and to meet costs associated with improvements to home working and remote access meetings.

It was agreed that a budget review should be undertaken once a decision is made about the events planned for the remainder of 2020, and consideration given to supporting recovery measures for the town centre.

The Town Clerk was requested to provide costed proposals for additional IT provision together with the options for a suitable video conferencing platform.

**112 PAYMENTS AND FINANCIAL MATTERS**

1 List of payments were noted and approved

2 Bank account balances were noted, including that the first payment of the precept had been

received from CCBC

**113 NOTICE OF MOTION**

The following notice of motion was proposed by Councillor H Jackson and seconded by Councillor

S Kent:

“As a result of the cancellation of the Flower Festival and the Big Cheese funds have become available which I feel could be used to help alleviate some of the problems created by the current crisis.

I propose that the Town Council make donations of £750 each to two organisations working to address the serious difficulties faced by individuals and families within the Caerphilly Town area as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

Namely:

Caerphilly Foodbank to help with the supply and distribution of much needed food

Llamau to help tackle issues experienced by the homeless”

Councillor M Prew declared an interest and took no part in the discussion or decision making on this item. Councillor C Elsbury took the chairperson role for this item.

It was resolved to support the motion.

**114 MEMBER REQUESTS FOR FUTURE REPORTS**

There were no requests for reports.

It was agreed to arrange an informal remote access meeting with Inspector Gavin Clifton.

The meeting closed at 7.10pm