**CAERPHILLY CYNGOR**

**TOWN TREF**

**COUNCIL CAERFFILI**

**TOWN CLERK: TOWN MAYOR: CLERC Y DREF: MAIR Y DREF:**

**P. G. Davy Councillor**

**Mike Prew**

8th June 2020

An **Ordinary Meeting** of the **Caerphilly Town Council** will be held on **Monday 15th June 2020**

at **6.30 pm** by **Remote Access**

Any Member requiring further information on any item should contact me before the Meeting.

Phil Davy

Town Clerk

**A G E N D A**

1. To note Members’ attendance and to receive any apologies for absence.

2. Declarations of Interest in any item.

3. To receive and if thought fit to confirm the Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting

held on 18th May 2020.

4. Matters arising from the Minutes if not covered by the Agenda.

5. **COMMUNITY SAFETY MATTERS**

6. **TOWN MAYOR’S DIARY**

7. **ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS**

8. **TOWN CLERK’S REPORTS**

8.1 Minor Authority Representative Ysgol Gymraeg Caerffili.

8.2 Additional IT Provision.

Address: The "Twyn Community Centre The Twyn Caerphilly CF83 IJL

Telephone: Caerphilly 02920 888777

E-mail: [caerphillytowncouncil@outlook.com](mailto:caerphillytowncouncil@outlook.com)

Office hours: Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday mornings 9.30a.m. to 12.30p.m

9. **PAYMENT AND FINANCIAL MATTERS**

9.1 List of Payments.

9.2 Bank Account Balances.

10. **CORRESPONDENCE**

11. **MEMBERS REQUESTS FOR FUTURE REPORTS**

This Meeting will be held in accordance with the Local Authorities (Coronavirus)

(Meetings) (Wales) Regulations 2020. The Regulations make temporary provision in relation to local authority meetings during the Covid 19 pandemic. Statutory requirements placed on local authorities by existing legislation to admit the public and press in person to certain meetings and to provide facilities to inspect certain documents in person at offices of the authority are relaxed for the duration of the Regulations.

All documentation about and relating to this and any other Town Council Meeting undertaken by remote access will be made available on the Town Council Website.

[www.caerphillytowncouncil.co.uk](http://www.caerphillytowncouncil.co.uk)

**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.

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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

**Agenda Item 8.1**

**Report to Town Council 15th June 2020**

**Minor Authority Representative Ysgol Gymraeg Caerffili**

The Education Achievement Service for South East Wales (EAS) has advised there is a vacancy for a representative on the governing body of Ysgol Gymraeg Caerffili. The representative was Cllr P J Bevan whose term of office ended in January 2020.

Two nominations have been received. Cllr P J Bevan has requested that he is considered for reappointment.

The second nomination is for Emma James, a resident living in the Kingsmead Estate and who has a child at the school. Emma has submitted the following statement:

“I am passionate about education and would like the opportunity to make a positive impact offering a fresh perspective, providing a valuable contribution to maintaining the school’s outstanding reputation and continue to improve children’s education and experience.

I have worked for Cardiff University for 18 years and currently manage the Undergraduate Admissions Team within the School of Medicine. I review and implement policy, organise and run events, plan and monitor budgets, recruit staff, support and guide colleagues and stakeholders, produce and present annual and monthly reports detailing applications to intake data. I must monitor and evaluate the performance of my team against set objectives ensuring we meet the aims and values of the University.

I solely manage a successful Neighbourhood Watch group which I introduced in 2018 covering over 80 residences. I provide a monthly newsletter, updates, and activity alerts. This has brought the community together enabling residents to communicate easily and frequently, bringing a greater sense of community to the area.

Throughout my school years my family organised and helped at school events and I was always involved. I’d like the opportunity to continue this.

I feel these varied skills would enable me to contribute effectively if appointed.”

The EAS has confirmed that it is permissible to appoint a representative who is a parent with a child at the school so long as they are not also a staff member at the school.

Members are invited to consider the nominations and make an appointment to the minor authority representative on the governing body of Ysgol Gymraeg Caerffili.

Phil Davy

Town Clerk

**Agenda Item 8.2**

**Report to Town Council 15th June 2020**

**Additional IT Provision**

At the last meeting of the Town Council on 18th May 2020 working arrangements were discussed in light of an extended period of social distancing once the lockdown measures relating to the coronavirus epidemic are eased.

It was agreed that it was not feasible to reopen the office for the foreseeable future due to the difficulties in satisfying the social distancing requirements and therefore homeworking for employees would need to continue. Members also agreed that face to face meetings would not be possible for some months and that a subscription to a suitable video conferencing platform should be considered.

The Town Clerk was requested to provide costed proposals for additional IT provision to support homeworking and set out options for a suitable video conferencing platform.

The Town Council owns one laptop which is currently with the Administrative Assistant to enable her to work from home. The Town Clerk is currently using a personal laptop to conduct Town Council business. In view of the extended homeworking it is advocated that a second laptop is purchased for use by the Town Clerk together with the required Microsoft office software.

There are numerous video conferencing platforms but the three below appear to be the most popular.

1 Zoom Pro at £11-99 per month

This paid for version of Zoom upgrades the features from the free app. Maximum meeting duration is 24 hours, and as many meetings as required. Option for others being able to host a meeting. Big advantage is all participants (up to 100) can be seen on screen at the same time. Already tested this format with the first remote access Council meeting.

2 Microsoft Teams 365 Business Basic at £3-80 per user / per month, first six months free with annual commitment

Anyone can join a meeting without a Teams account from any device as a guest, but there may be some limitations. Only 9 video feeds on screen at any one time. This may be the cheapest solution with a single user and everyone joining as guests, or most expensive with all Members registered as users.

3 Go To Meeting Professional at £9-50 per month (annual commitment)

Offers similar screen sharing functionality to Zoom. Requires a numeric code to connect and limited to 11 video feeds on screen at same time. Some other community councils are using this platform.

Zoom is a web conferencing software that facilitates high performance video and audio conferencing which meets the Council’s primary requirement for remote access meetings. Due to its phenomenal growth and popularity during lockdown Zoom has experienced security issues. Generally, it is still safe to use so long as meeting links and passwords are not widely shared or made public. Zoom is also easy to set up, use and manage. Based on a survey by Society of Local Council Clerks Zoom is the most widely used tool amongst parish, town, and community councils.

Microsoft Teams is a collaboration tool designed to improve internal communication and integrates with Office 365 software which is why it is a popular choice for business. It would be necessary to take out an annual licence for Office 365 software on the new laptop to ensure compatibility with Teams.

Go To Meeting would be an alternative choice to Zoom.

Having already had one successful remote access Town Council meeting by Zoom when 11 Members were able to connect, opting for Microsoft Teams or Go To Meeting would be starting again and it would be necessary to get everyone capable of linking to a meeting.

Feedback from some Members has indicated a preference to stay with Zoom.

The proposals set out below do not form part of the approved budget for 2020-21 and in accordance with financial regulation 3.2 it is necessary to seek a formal resolution of the Town Council to the expenditure having identified how the expenditure can be funded from within the budget. Members will be aware that there are already savings on the original budget due to the cancellation of the Flower Festival, Food Fair, and Big Cheese. The budget for these three events in 2020/21 is £8000. A sum of £1500 was committed from these savings to make donations to Llamau and Caerphilly Foodbank.

It is recommended that the following items are purchased:

£

1 Dell Inspiron 15 5593 Laptop 499-16 + vat

2 Dell wireless mouse 17-99 + vat

3 Microsoft Home and Business 2019 (Lifetime 1 user) 191-65 + vat

(Note alternative would be Microsoft 365 Personal 1 year for 1 user annual licence fee of £49-99 + vat)

4 Zoom Pro annual subscription 144-00

It is further recommended that a sum of £1100 (inclusive of vat) is vired from the savings identified to the IT support budget to cover the cost of the above items.

Phil Davy, Town Clerk

Agenda Item 9.1

Report to Town Council 15th June 2020

List of Payments

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Cheque No** | **Payee** | **In Respect of** | **Amount £** |
| Internet | Playworks | Salaries (May) | 1612.29 |
| Direct Debit | Nest | Pension (May) | 27.21 |
| Internet | Gwyn James | Internal audit | 200.00 |
| Internet | Came & Company | Insurance Renewal | 1684.55 |
| 304098 | Llamau | Donation | 750.00 |
| 304099 | Caerphilly Foodbank | Donation | 750.00 |

It is recommended that Members note and approve the payments

**Agenda Item 9.2**

**Report to Town Council 15th June 2020**

**Bank Account Balances**

Bank account balances at 1st June 2020

£

Community Direct Plus Account 64,684-39

Business Select Account 10,625-68

Business Select Account (Restricted Reserves) 12,976-95

Members to note the information