**C A E R P H I L L Y T O W N C O U N C I L**

 **C Y N G O R T R E F C A E R F F I L I**

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

**P. G. Davy Cllr Mike Prew**

12th April 2021

An **Ordinary Meeting** of the **Caerphilly Town Council** will be held on **Monday 19th April 2021** 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 Monday 15th March 2021. . .

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 Q4 Budget Monitoring.

 8.2 Budget Outturn 2020/21.

 8.3 Coronavirus update.

 8.4 National Eisteddfod Plaque.

 8.5 Open Art Competition.

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

Telephone: Caerphilly 02920 888777

E-mail: caerphillytowncouncil@outlook.com

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

9. **PLANNING MATTERS**

**10. PAYMENT AND FINANCIAL MATTERS**

 10.1 List of Payments.

 10.2 Bank Account Balances.

11. **CORRESPONDENCE**

 11.1 Complaint re Christmas Selection Packs.

 11.2 Complaint re Lack of Daffodils.

12. **MEMBERS REQUESTS FOR FUTURE REPORTS**

 There were no requests.

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 Authorities 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)

**C A E R P H I L L Y T O W N C O U N C I L**

 **C Y N G O R T R E F C A E R F F I L I**

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

**P. G. Davy Cllr Mike Prew**

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

**HELD BY REMOTE ACCESS ON MONDAY 15TH MARCH 2021**

**Present:**

Councillors P J Bevan, R Bidgood, C Elsbury, J Fussell, J Grenfell, J Hibbert,

H Jackson, S Kent, S Morgan, M Prew, J Pritchard

**Apologies:**

Councillor S Hodder

**In Attendance:**

L Powell, Gwent Police

P G Davy, Town Clerk

74 **MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 15TH FEBRUARY 2021**

Minutes of the Ordinary Town Council Meeting held on 15th February 2021 were received and confirmed. Minutes to be signed by the Town Mayor when practical.

75 **MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising.

76 **COMMUNITY SAFETY MATTERS**

The following matters were raised:

* Traffic queuing on roundabout for Costa / McDonalds, problem may reduce when lockdown ends
* Groups of young people congregating in park opposite Caerphilly Castle late evenings

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* Drinking alcohol in town centre during daytime
* Speeding on Lon y Llwyn
* Problems in lane from Bryncenydd Estate to Mill Road
* Parking on double yellow lines outside Spar on Mill Road

77 **TOWN MAYOR’S DIARY**

The Mayor hoped to be able to undertake some events with Caerphilly Borough Mind when the lockdown restrictions are lifted.

78 **ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS**

No matters raised.

79 **TOWN CLERK’S REPORTS**

1 CIL Working Group

The Town Council considered the recommendations from the CIL Working Group and agreed that the following projects should in principle be funded from CIL monies subject to further detailed consideration, consultation with CCBC as appropriate, and cost estimates.

 1 Memorial / plaque to Llewellyn Bren, Lord of Senghenydd, who led a rebellion against the Normans in 1316.

 2 Memorial / plaque to acknowledge the contribution of all key workers during the coronavirus pandemic.

3 Additional seats to the north of Caerphilly Castle moat including Town Council

sponsorship plaques.

4 Refurbishment of floodlighting at St Martins Church.

5 Barrier to prevent vehicular access at Pontypandy Lane (Aldi end adjacent to Kingsmead Estate).

6 Additional and / or higher capacity replacement general waste and dog waste bins.

7 Explanatory plaque incorporating braille on Welsh National Anthem Memorial at the Twyn.

2 Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 received Royal Assent on 20th January 2021. The Act provides for a phased approach to introducing various provisions and reserves powers to Welsh Ministers to issue more detailed regulations and guidance.

Attention was drawn to the following:

*Elections*

The Act provides for the extension of the local government franchise to allow 16 and

17-year-olds to be able to register to vote in Welsh local government elections.

*General Power of Competence*

From 5 May 2022 town and community councils will have the power to pass resolutions to become eligible to exercise General Powers of Competence.

*Access to Meetings*

The Act makes permanent provision for remote access meetings and electronic publication of documents.

*Public Participation*

From 5 May 2022 members of the public attending council meetings should be given reasonable opportunity to make representations about any business being discussed at the meeting.

*Annual Reports*

From April 2022 town and community councils will have a duty to prepare and publish a report about the council’s priorities, activities, and achievements.

*Training of Members and Staff*

Town and community councils will have a duty to consider training from 5 May 2022 for councillors and staff, and publish the first training plans by November 2022.

Members noted the new duties and timescales and acknowledged that the budget implications would need to be addressed.

3 Floodlighting St Martins Church – Safety Inspection

The floodlights at St Martins Church are owned by the Town Council and listed on the asset register. Quotations had been invited to undertake an electrical safety inspection.

It was agreed to appoint BPS Facilities Ltd, Cardiff to undertake inspections and testing and provide a written report on the floodlighting installation. The contractor will be provided with a contact at the church.

4 Caerphilly Tourism Association

The Caerphilly Tourism Association brings tourism operators together in a representative body for the tourism industry in Caerphilly County Borough. The membership is aimed at hospitality, accommodation, attractions and organisers of medium to large scale events. The CTA has decided that all new and current members will receive free membership until 31 March 2022. After this date the membership fee of £50 for two years will be reinstated. Members felt it was important to work with other partners to attract visitors back to the town after the pandemic restrictions are lifted.

It was agreed that the Town Council should take up membership of the CTA, that the Town Mayor be appointed as the representative on the CTA, and the Deputy Mayor as reserve representative.

80 **PLANNING MATTERS**

The following planning applications were considered, and comments made as follows:

20/1068/FULL – no objections

21/0067/FULL – no objections

21/0103/COU – no objections

21/0154/FULL – no objections

21/0168/TPO – no objections

21/0180/FULL – no objections

Councillor J Fussell declared an interest and took no part in the discussion or decision making on any of the applications.

Councillor C Elsbury declared an interest and took no part in the discussion or decision making on any of the applications.

81 **PAYMENTS AND FINANCIAL MATTERS**

1 List of payments were noted and approved.

2 Bank account balances were noted.

82 **CORRESPONDENCE**

The Town Council had made a number of donations and letters of thanks had been received from Velindre Cancer Centre, Caerffili Lions Club, Friends of Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, and Caerphilly Borough Mind. The letters were all noted.

83 **MEMBER REQUESTS FOR FUTURE REPORTS**

There were no requests.

The meeting closed at 7.10pm

**Agenda Item 8.1**

**Report to Town Council 19th April 2021**

**Q4 Budget Monitoring (2020/21 Financial Year)**

Comparison of actual expenditure to annual estimate for the period 1st April 2020 to

31st March 2021

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Main Budget Heads** | **Q4 Actual £** | **Annual Estimate £** |
| Mayor’s Allowance | 900.00 | 900.00 |
| Members Allowances | 450.00 | 1800.00 |
| Staff Costs | 20331.05 | 20221.00 |
| Travelling Expenses | 0 | 500.00 |
| Audit Fee | 504.85 | 400.00 |
| Insurance | 1684.55 | 1586.00 |
| Office Costs | 3977.15 | 8300.00 |
| Sponsored Events | 101.10 | 14550.00 |
| Concessionary Hires | 0 | 0 |
| Fireworks Display | 1750.00 | 15000.00 |
| Fireworks Charity Donation | 5000.00 | 4000.00 |
| Floral Decorations | 12208.48 | 13500.00 |
| Christmas Lights | 12865.88 | 8500.00 |
| Lantern Parade | 0 | 8500.00 |
| Financial Assistance  | 6050.00 | 6000.00 |
| Summer Sports Scheme | 0 | 5000.00 |
| Newsletter | 687.50 | 600.00 |
| Elections | 0 | 0 |
| Miscellaneous | 89.00 | 1050.00 |
| VAT | 5649.69 | Inc in estimates |
| CIL Projects |  |  |
| **TOTAL** | 72249.25 | 110407.00 |

 £

Budget for 2020/21 110.407.00

Revised estimate of expenditure 85.159.00

(as reported to Town Council in

November 2020)

Actual expenditure to 31.03.21 72.249.25

(65% of original budget, 85% of

Revised November 2020 estimate)

Members are invited to note the report

**Agenda Item 8.2**

**Report to Town Council 19 April 2021**

**Budget Outturn 2020/21**

Needless to say the expenditure pattern in 2020/21 did not reflect a normal year. The original estimate of expenditure was £110,407 set against an estimated income of £113,313. It was therefore anticipated that a small surplus would arise and a balanced budget would be achieved without having to use any reserves.

The outturn expenditure for 2020/21 was £72,249-25, which is lower than the revised estimate reported in November 2020. Income was higher than the estimate at £119,348-61 largely due to a higher VAT reclaim and higher CIL receipt. The significantly lower expenditure was mainly due to the cancellation of all the annual events either directly organised or sponsored as a consequence of the pandemic.

The result is a surplus of income over expenditure of £47099-36 which will increase the balances carried forward into 2021/22.

The balances at 31st March 2021 are summarised as follows:

 £

Community Direct Plus Account (current account) 61,426-14

Business Select Account (operational reserves) 10,636-51

Business Select Account (restricted reserves) 22.335-10

**Total**  94,397-75

The funds held in the current account include the savings made during the 2020/21 financial year. Note the current account has to cover all outgoings during April 2021 as no income will be received until the end of the month when the first tranche of the precept is due from CCBC. Reserved creditors are not applied to the accounts and therefore any late invoices will have to be paid in the 2021/22 financial year.

In general the balances have been declining year on year since 2017, but the unusual year has reversed the position. The budget for 2021/22 approved by the Town Council in November 2020 requires a contribution from balances of £7,572 to achieve a balanced budget as expenditure is projected to be in excess of income. It is also suggested that a sum of £12,000 is reserved to cover the costs of the Town Council elections in 2022. With these provisions and allowing for current account cashflow there will be around £20,000 of available unrestricted reserves. Although note that there are some items of planned expenditure in 2020/21 that have been delayed, such as the improvements to office security. Notwithstanding, the financial position means there is some flexibility to support initiatives that may develop during the year. The year will be characterised by the lifting of restrictions as society reopens after the pandemic and the need to stimulate the local economy.

Members are invited to note the financial outturn position for 2020/21.

Phil Davy

Town Clerk

**Agenda Item 8.3**

**Report to Town Council 19 April 2021**

**Coronavirus Update**

It was agreed at the January meeting of the Town Council that staff should continue to work from home and Town Council meetings would continue to be held by remote access and the position reviewed in April 2021.

Welsh Government has started to ease the lockdown restrictions with elements of the tourism industry (self contained accommodation) opening from end of March and non essential retail from mid April. However unlike in England there is no route map in Wales with indicative dates for the complete lifting of all restrictions.

Members are reminded the Town Council has responsibilities as an employer under health and safety legislation and this includes taking reasonable steps to protect employees, councillors, and visitors from coronavirus. The Town Council must follow the requirements laid down by Welsh Government in the Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) (Wales) Regulations 2020 as amended. Currently these require any workplace that remains open to be risk assessed and made Covid secure.

The England route map envisages that all restrictions will be lifted by late June. This is allied to the roll out of the vaccinations. All adults are currently expected to have been offered a vaccine by end of July. Using this as an indicative timescale it may be possible to return to normal working by the summer. It is therefore suggested that the current arrangements continue through to the August recess and arrangements be reviewed at the September meeting of the Town Council.

The Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Meetings) (Wales) Regulations 2020 that were introduced to enable meetings of local authorities to be by remote attendance lapse at the end of April. However new provisions will come into effect under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. This will make permanent the facility for remote access and will have implications for the long term arrangements for council meetings.

Section 47 of the LGE (Wales) Act states that a local authority must make and publish arrangements for the purpose of ensuring that local authority meetings are able to be held by means of any equipment or other facility which enables persons who are not in the same place to attend the meetings subject to being able to speak and be heard by each other, but not necessarily to see and be seen by each other. Not all Members may be keen to return to physical meetings and attendance by remote access does offer more convenience.

The pandemic has changed the way in which many businesses and organisations across the world are working. The Town Council office has been closed for over a year and it has clearly been demonstrated that the administration and functioning of the Town Council can be undertaken with the staff working from home. The Welsh Government has set a long term ambition of 30% of the Welsh workforce working from home, or much closer to home. There are pros and cons to home working, but it will be incumbent on the Town Council to review staff working arrangements as there is no overriding requirement that the office is open three mornings a week as this has no bearing on the efficient functioning of the organisation. The office has virtually no walk in callers.

If the assumptions that most restrictions will have been lifted by the summer proves correct that will open the way for the Fireworks Display and Christmas Lights Switch On in November. Due to the advance planning required for the events a decision will need to be taken at the July meeting of the Town Council.

It is recommended:

1 Staff continue to work from home and Town Council meetings continue to be held by

 remote access including the AGM through to the August recess.

2 On the assumption that normality may largely have returned by September 2021 a

 review is undertaken of the longer term arrangements for staff homeworking, office

 hours, and remote (hybrid) access to Town Council meetings and Working Groups.

3 A decision is made at the July Town Council meeting whether to proceed with the

 planning for the Fireworks Display and Christmas events for 2021 based on the

 prevailing circumstances.

Phil Davy

Town Clerk

**Agenda Item 8.4**

**Report to Town Council 19 April 2021**

**National Eisteddfod Plaque**

Attention has been drawn to the poor condition of the plaque that is adjacent to the gates constructed to commemorate the holding of the National Eisteddfod at Crescent Road in 1950. The plaque has deteriorated due to weathering and is now barely legible. The plaque was jointly sponsored by CCBC and the Town Council. The information on the plaque reads:

“In 1950 a landmark feature was built by local stonemasons at this location to celebrate the opening of the National Eisteddfod on these fields. The structure was lovingly and accurately reconstructed in 2009 by Caerphilly Town Council and Caerphilly County Borough Council to commemorate this special event.”

To refurbish the existing lectern and provide a replacement sign will cost £255-50 + vat. Following discussion with CCBC it has been agreed to share the cost 50:50 between the two councils. CCBC will organise the work and invoice the Town Council for the agreed amount.

It is recommended that the Town Council agree to meet the 50% contribution of £127-75 +vat. As there is no maintenance budget and given the low cost it is further recommended that this is recorded against miscellaneous expenditure.

Phil Davy

Town Clerk

**Agenda Item 8.5**

**Report to Town Council 19 April 2021**

**Open Art Competition**

A request has been received for sponsorship of the prizes for the Open Art Competition in 2021-22. This is an event that the Town Council has sponsored for a number of years. The event did not happen in 2020-21. The Town Council has approved a budget for 2021-22 which includes an estimate of £16000 for the sponsorship of various events organised by third parties. Normally a report would have been received setting out the list of sponsored events for approval, but this has been delayed until further information has been received from Welsh Government on the lifting of restrictions. At the present time there is uncertainty about when events that attract large numbers of people may be able to resume in Wales and what, if any, limitations may be imposed.

The organiser of the Open Art Competition is optimistic that this event will be possible and the gallery where exhibits are displayed will be able to reopen in April.

It is recommended that the Town Council confirm sponsorship of £1050 in 2021-22 to cover the prizes for the Open Art Competition.

Phil Davy

Town Clerk

**Agenda Item 9**

**Report to Town Council 19 April 2021**

**Planning Matters**

The following planning applications have been received:

21/0178/RET Camelot, Pontygwindy Road, Caerphilly CF83 3HY

Retain and complete the partial demolition of existing dwelling and replace with a two storey 4 bedroom dwelling with garage.

21/0127/FULL Land at Grid Ref 315956 184975 Cefn Carnau Lane, Thornhill, Caerphilly

Erect single storey agricultural building.

21/0227/FULL 161 Pontygwindy Road, Caerphilly CF83 3HQ

Demolish existing single storey and erect two storey extension side and rear with dormer attic conversion.

21/0249/COU Poundstretcher, Castle View Shopping Centre, Cae Meillion, Caerphilly

Change the use from retail (A1) to gym (D2)

21/0283/NCC Catnic Pontygwindy Industrial Estate, Caerphilly CF83 3GL

Vary condition 03 (time to submit reserved matters) and 04 (time to commence development) of planning consent 16/0208/OUT (Erect 176 dwellings and access with all other matters reserved) to extend the date for submission of reserved matters and commence the development.

**Agenda Item 10.1**

**Report to Town Council 19th April 2021**

**List of Payments**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Cheque No** | **Payee** | **In Respect of** | **Amount £** |
| Internet | Digital Systems UK | Printing | 36.00 |
| Internet | Twyn Community Centre | Rent | 1600.00 |
| Internet | Digital Systems UK | Printing | 36.00 |
| Direct Debit | Sage Global Services | Payroll Software | 2.52 |
| Debit Card | ICO Registration Renewal | Annual Registration | 40.00 |
| 304118 | SSE | Energy Christmas Lights | 258.47 |
| Internet | Play Works | Salaries Admin only | 21.00 |
| Internet | HMRC | Income Tax and NI | 546.61 |
| Internet | Admin Assistant | Salary (March) | 381.30 |
| Internet | Town Clerk | Salary (March) | 720.19 |
| 304119 | M Prew | Mayor’s Allowance | 225.00 |
| Direct Debit | NEST | Pension (March) | 27.96 |

Is is recommended that Members note and approve payments

**Agenda Item 10.2**

**Report to Town Council 19th April 2021**

**Bank Account Balances**

Bank Account Balances as at 1st April 2021

 **£**

Community Direct Plus Account 61,426.14

Business Select Account 10,636.51

Business Select Account (Restricted Reserves) 22,335.10

Members to note the information

**Agenda Item 11**

**Report to Town Council 19 April 2021**

**Correspondence**

**11.1 Complaint regarding Christmas Selection Packs**

The complaint was received by email on 14.3.21.

“Dear Council

I tried to send this letter via your website but it failed to transmit.

I was dismayed before Christmas to find my granddaughter bringing home a Cadbury’s selection pack of “chocolates”. I use inverted commas as there was very little chocolate involved. It was more plastic packaging than anything else.

Personally I do not agree with public money being spent on such wasteful items. We need to discourage plastic use, and discourage excess sugar intake, both for obvious reasons.

I could not find a reference in the Council minutes in October or November last year to the proposal to distribute this junk, nor an account of cost.

My feeling is that it was a highly irresponsible action, and that the most pressing need is to tackle the climate and pollution (including rubbish) problems.

Yours faithfully

Jill Baird”

**11.2 Complaint re lack of daffodils**

The complaint was received by email on 25.3.21.

“There is a serious lack of daffodils in Caerphilly. The bypass is bereft bar a few, Crossways Park has none all. Porset Brook green by Lansbury Park has none at all.

I drove to Bath the other day and the roads there were banked up with daffodils for miles. It was more Welsh than Caerphilly. The Council seems happy to give charitable donations and buying sweets for kids but it could be better spent.

Daffodils will come up every year almost forever. I’ll remind you again in the autumn when it’s time to plant.

Richard Windus”