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

**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**

20th September 2022

An **Ordinary Meeting** of the **Caerphilly Town Council** will be held on **Monday 26th September 2022** at **6.30 pm** by **Multi Location**

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 20th June 2022. .

1. Matters arising from the Minutes if not covered by the Agenda.
2. **COMMUNITY SAFETY MATTERS**

1. **TOWN MAYOR’S DIARY**
2. **ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS**

The Waste and Strategy Operations Supervisor, CCBC will be in attendance to discuss concerns about waste collections frequency and general cleansing.

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

**Telephone: Caerphilly 07950 935822**

**E-mail: caerphillytowncouncil@outlook.com**

**Office hours: By Appointment Monday to Friday**

1. **TOWN CLERK’S REPORTS**

8.1 Q1 Budget Monitoring 2022/23 Financial Year.

8.2 Floral Decorations – Confirmation of Action.

8.3 The Finance and Governance Toolkit for Community and Town Councils – The Health Check.

8.4 Events Working Group/CIL Working Group.

8.5 Little Cheese – Confirmation of Action.

8.6 Town Council Community Service Award Scheme.

8.7 Training Plan (Draft).

8.8 Review of Biodiversity Statement.

8.9 Employee Code of Conduct.

8.10 Full Audit 2021-22.

9. **PLANNING MATTERS**

10. **PAYMENT AND FINANCIAL MATTERS**

10.1 List of Payments.

10.2 Bank Account Balances.

10.3 Applications for Financial Assistance

1. 1223(Caerphilly) Air Training Corps

11. **CORRESPONDENCE**

11.1 Sport Caerphilly Sport Awards – Table Sponsor.

12. **MEMBERS REQUESTS FOR FUTURE REPORTS**

This Meeting will be held in accordance with Section 47 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 by multi location.

Any member of the public or media wishing to attend this meeting by remote access should contact the Town Clerk at:

[caerphillytowncouncil@outlook.com](mailto:caerphillytowncouncil@outlook.com)

All documentation about and relating to this and any other Town Council Meeting undertaken either by hybrid format or fully 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 MULTI LOCATION ON 20TH JUNE 2022**

**Present:**

Councillors P J Bevan, M Downes, C Elsbury, J Grenfell, S Kent, C Lewis, A Broughton Pettit, M Prew, P Reed, D Roberts

**Apologies:**

Councillors J Fussell, J Pettit

**In Attendance:**

J McDonnell, R Collins, Gwent Police

P G Davy, Town Clerk

**24 MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 16TH MAY 2022**

Minutes of the Ordinary Town Council Meeting held on 16th May 2022 were received and confirmed. Minutes to be signed by the Town Mayor when practical.

**25 MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising.

**26 COMMUNITY SAFETY MATTERS**

The police gave an overview indicating that things had returned to normal after the pandemic and there were the usual recurring issues of ASB in key locations including Morgan Jones Park, railway and bus station, and around certain public houses. Routine patrols were in place to pick up these locations. There were no major incidents to report.

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

**Telephone: Caerphilly 07950 935822**

**E-mail: caerphillytowncouncil@outlook.com**

**Office hours: By Appointment Monday to Friday**

Members requested information on the effect of CCTV cameras at Morgan Jones Park and the Mill Road allotments. Although the police were unable to provide specific data they considered that CCTV was part of an overall management approach.

Concerns were raised about parking in various locations which caused obstructions to both highway and pedestrian users. The police explained that parking enforcement was now primarily the responsibility of CCBC.

**27 TOWN MAYOR’S DIARY**

The Mayor reported that it felt that normality had returned with a range of events back in the town.

He had attended a fund raising concert at Wesley Chapel, officially opened the milk vending station at Pontygwindy Road, attended the Malcolm Uphill Memorial event, and toured the venues participating in the Caerphilly Flower Festival.

**28 ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS**

Concern was raised at the manner in which the resurfacing programme was being implemented, the poor standard of cleansing of the town, litter, bins not emptied, and the environment around the castle. A request was made for a dog waste bin at Castle View Estate (location details to be provided to the Town Clerk).

**29 TOWN CLERK’S REPORTS**

1 IT for Members

Town Council business is largely conducted electronically a process reinforced during the pandemic with staff working from home and the introduction of remote access meetings. There are compelling reasons to ensure all Members have suitable IT equipment that is separate from personal devices ensuring a separation for business use. The report outlined a proposition for Members to use the mandatory allowances to cover the cost of a standardised approach to IT. The upfront cost would be met by the Town Council with costs recovered from the allowances over a 4 year period. There was no consensus around either of the options in the report. As a consequence no further action will be taken in respect of supplying IT equipment to Members.

Members were advised to set up a free email account for Town Council business and avoid using personal email accounts. It was noted that the oldest of the 2 council laptops issued to the Administrative Assistant has now completely failed and will need to be replaced. The cost will be charged to the IT budget.

2 Replacement Notice Board

Consent had been received from the landowner, Caerphilly County Borough Council, to install a post mounted freestanding notice board in front of the Twyn Community Centre

subject to a number of conditions. A budget virement of £2000 had previously been

agreed for a notice board. Since the report was drafted a quotation has been received for two alternatives. The Stormguard post mounted notice board with a single door and 5 year guarantee is £741 plus £700 for installation, and £100 for removal and disposal of old noticeboard (total £1541 + vat). The Notus double door notice board has a 15 year guarantee and is of more robust construction with superior vandal and weather resistance

is £1750 plus £700 installation, and £100 for removal and disposal of old noticeboard (total £2550 + vat).

It was resolved to proceed with the quotation for the Notus product in the sum of £2550 + vat. The increase in cost from the budget set aside will be funded from balances.

3 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Payment for 2021/22

Notification had been received from Caerphilly County Borough Council that the CIL payment for 2021/22 will be £1371-35, taking the total CIL receipts since 2016 to £37192-45. The available uncommitted CIL for new projects is £5572. A project review was referred to the CIL Working Group.

**30 PLANNING MATTERS**

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

22/0325/COU – objections were raised to this application due to the adverse impact on residential amenity due to noise and disturbance to nearby residential properties.

22/0427/FULL – no objections

22/0428/LBC – no objections

22/0429/FULL – no objections

22/0436/FULL – no objections

22/0390/FULL – no objections

22/0391/ADV – no objections

22/0432/FULL – no objections

22/0320/FULL – no objections

22/0468/FULL – no objections

22/0481/RET – no objections

22/0493/FULL – no objections

**31 PAYMENTS AND FINANCIAL MATTERS**

1 List of payments were noted and approved

2 Bank account balances were noted

3 Applications for Financial Assistance

2nd Caerphilly Brownies Girlguiding

A grant of £250 was approved. Expenditure authorised under Local Government Act 1972, section 137.

Aber Valley Wolves Rugby League Club

A grant of £400 was approved. Expenditure authorised under Local Government Act 1972, section 137.

Councillor J Grenfell declared an interest and took no part in the discussion or decision making on this application.

Caerphilly Miners Centre for the Community

A grant of £400 was approved. Expenditure authorised under Local Government Act 1972, section 137.

Gwent Police Fun Day Morgan Jones Park

It was agreed to sponsor the Fun Day and a sum of £400 was approved from the Sponsored Events budget. Expenditure authorised under Local Government Act 1972, section 137.

**32 CORRESPONDENCE**

1 The complaint about the condition of the town centre was noted but most of the issues raised were the responsibility of Caerphilly County Borough Council. In terms of the appearance this had been enhanced by the summer floral decorations which are funded by the Town Council. Members agreed with the complainant about the unsatisfactory standard of cleansing and agreed to pursue the matter with CCBC. Information to be requested on frequency of road and pavement sweeping, emptying of general litter bins, emptying of dog waste bins.

2 The complaint about the Stagecoach bus services was noted. The complainant be advised to contact Stagecoach directly as this is not a service change issue.

**33 MEMBER REQUESTS FOR FUTURE REPORTS**

A report was requested on diversity and gender balance on the Town Council but this was not supported as the make up of the Town Council is determined by those standing and ultimately elected.

The meeting closed at 8.30 pm

**Agenda Item 8.1**

**Report to Town Council 26th September 2022**

**Q1 Budget Monitoring 2022/23 Financial Year**

Comparison of actual expenditure to annual estimates for the period 1st April 2022 to 30th June 2022.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Main Budget Heads** | **Q1 Actual £** | **Annual Estimate £** |
| Mayor’s Allowance | 225.00 | 900.00 |
| Members Allowances | 0 | 1800.00 |
| Staff Costs | 5539.17 | 21470.00 |
| Travelling Expenses | 0 | 500.00 |
| Audit Fees | 200.00 | 600.00 |
| Insurance | 1110.61 | 2000.00 |
| Office Costs | 2612.41 | 11250.00 |
| Sponsored Events | 7650.00 | 16000.00 |
| Concessionary Hires | 0 | 0 |
| Fireworks Display | 0 | 16000.00 |
| Fireworks Charity Donation | 0 | 4000.00 |
| Floral Decorations | 5706.50 | 16000.00 |
| Christmas Lights | 0 | 10000.00 |
| Lantern Parade | 0 | 10000.00 |
| Financial Assistance | 1450.00 | 6000.00 |
| Sports Scheme | 0 | 9000.00 |
| Newsletter | 0 | 900.00 |
| Elections | 0 | 12000.00 |
| Miscellaneous | 2677.75 | 1100.00 |
| VAT | 1811.44 |  |
| CIL Projects | 0 |  |
| **TOTAL** | 28982.88 | 139520.00 |

£

Budget 2022/23 139520

Actual expenditure to 30.06.22 28983

(21% of budget)

Members are invited to note the report

**Agenda Item 8.2 Report to**

**Town Council 26th September 2022**

**Floral Decorations – Confirmation of Action**

J S Lee Services Ltd is engaged to undertake the watering of the floral decorations in the town centre over a period of 16 weeks from the end of May to mid September 2022. This involves 56 visits (ie every two days) to water and tend to the baskets and planters. The price to be charged for this service was agreed with the contractor in January 2022 at £100 + vat per visit, a total cost of £5600 +vat. (Note there are other costs associated with taking delivery and placing the baskets and planters around the town centre and removing them at the end of the summer.)

Notification was received from the contractor on 22nd June 2022 that the cost per visit for watering would have to be increased to £140 +vat per visit for this year due to escalating costs of fuel and labour resulting in a 40% increase in the cost for the 56 visits, ie from £5600 to £7840 + vat. Clearly there has been a significant change in the economic circumstances in the country since January and the rapid escalation in inflation is impacting on all businesses.

The cost of the plants from the nurseries this year was £5706-50 +vat. Without regular watering there is the risk they will deteriorate very quickly. The Town Clerk was of the view that a decision could not wait until the July meeting of the Town Council. Members were consulted on their views and those Members who responded supported maintaining the service accepting there would be an increase in the cost. Consideration was given to a reduced frequency of watering to keep within the original figure but this could be counter productive given the highly variable weather conditions during the summer. Also, if the baskets and planters are left and dry out this may well attract criticism from the public.

Following the consultation with Members, the Town Clerk informed the contractor that the Town Council will meet the additional cost requested and for the contractor to maintain the agreed frequency of visits to water and maintain the baskets and planters. It is anticipated that the additional cost of £2240 +vat may be met by savings within the estimates for 2022/23 or from reserves.

The report is for confirmation of action taken by the Town Clerk.

Phil Davy

Town Clerk

**Agenda Item 8.3**

**Report to Town Council 26th September 2022**

**The Finance and Governance Toolkit for Community and Town Councils – The Health Check**

The toolkit has been developed jointly by One Voice Wales, the Society of Local Council Clerks and Welsh Government, with commentary from Audit Wales. The toolkit is to support:

* Review of the financial management, governance and accountability arrangements
* Consider how effective these arrangements are and how they might be improved

The application of the toolkit is not compulsory but it will assist in demonstrating that the council is meeting certain statutory requirements and provide assurance that the council is operating effectively with high standards of stewardship.

The toolkit is made up of two parts:

*Part 1 The Health Check*

The health check is designed to be completed by the clerk to assess whether fundamental governance and financial management arrangements, and policies are in place and highlight any action that needs to be taken.

*Part 2 The self assessment*

This is a more in depth review by councillors using the findings from Part 1 providing a structure to reflect more deeply on how the council is operating, managing its finances and governing itself. The council may decide it is satisfied with the outcome and actions from part 1 and not proceed with part 2.

Both components cover five key areas of community and town council activity.

* Vision, purpose and community planning
* Leadership and people
* Community engagement and partnerships
* Business processes
* Resources and financial management

Part 2 has an additional theme called evaluating impact which will enable the council to reflect on the benefit it brings to the community to inform its future work.

The toolkit is designed to be used flexibly so the council can choose to just focus on one theme, or any combination of the themes.

The Town Clerk has carried out the health check which consists of 102 questions across

the five themes. The document is appended to the report. In order to provide an overall assessment 12 questions have been discounted as not appropriate to the council’s

circumstances. Of the remaining 90 the number of yes answers has been totalled which gives a positive rating of 84%. There are a number of recommended actions to address those questions resulting in a negative answer. These require action by the council, individual Members, and the Town Clerk and have been given indicative timescales. If these actions are all addressed they would drive the positive rating towards 100%.

Recommendations

1 Members to consider the health check and endorse the actions identified

2 In light of the positive rating to determine whether they wish to undertake any further evaluation using all or elements from part 2 of the toolkit or are happy to stop at the assessment and action plan from part 1.

3 Subject to the decision on 2 to consider the mechanism for further in depth assessment. This might be best managed through a working group to which all Members would have an invitation on a par with other working groups.

Phil Davy

Town Clerk

**Part 1 The Health Check**

The health check is split into five key themes:

* [Vision, purpose](file:///C:\Users\KN\Documents\The%20Finance%20and%20Governance%20Toolkit%20for%20Community%20and%20Town%20councils%20E%20June%202022.docx#_Theme_–_Vision) and community planning
* [Leadership and people](file:///C:\Users\KN\Documents\The%20Finance%20and%20Governance%20Toolkit%20for%20Community%20and%20Town%20councils%20E%20June%202022.docx#_Theme_–_Leadership)
* [Community engagement and partnerships](file:///C:\Users\KN\Documents\The%20Finance%20and%20Governance%20Toolkit%20for%20Community%20and%20Town%20councils%20E%20June%202022.docx#_Theme_–_Community)
* [Business processes](file:///C:\Users\KN\Documents\The%20Finance%20and%20Governance%20Toolkit%20for%20Community%20and%20Town%20councils%20E%20June%202022.docx#_Theme_-_Business)
* [Resources and financial management](file:///C:\Users\KN\Documents\The%20Finance%20and%20Governance%20Toolkit%20for%20Community%20and%20Town%20councils%20E%20June%202022.docx#_Theme_-_Resources)

Each theme has a series of statements which require only a yes or no answer to indicate whether the council has that arrangement in place.

Where relevant, some further information has been included next to the statement. Click on any underlined text in the further information column to access additional resources.

Where a statement reflects a statutory obligation, the statement is shaded blue for ease of reference.

The final column in the health check should be used to note the assessment of the council’s position in relation to the statement, along with details of any action required and how quickly the action would need to be implemented.

There is space at the end of each theme to summarise actions for that theme, and space at the end of the health check to [summarise the key actions to be taken as a result of Part 1 - The health check](file:///C:\Users\KN\Documents\The%20Finance%20and%20Governance%20Toolkit%20for%20Community%20and%20Town%20councils%20E%20June%202022.docx#_Summary_of_actions) in one place.

## **Theme A – Vision, purpose and community planning**

A community and town council provides community leadership. In exercising this role it will benefit from having a clear vision for its community, developed in partnership / consultation with all sections of the community. This will inform council plans, budgets and activities to ensure the council best works with and in the interests of the community.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Statutory obligation** |

| **Theme A – Vision, purpose and community planning** | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Statement** | **In place? (Yes/No)** | **Further information** | **Comments and actions** |
| **The council has a clear vision and plan for its community** | | | |
| A.1 A vision and purpose statement has been agreed by the council | No | Having a clear vision and purpose agreed by all members will help your council in achieving for its community. | Could form part of a strategy or business plan for the term of the current council |
| A.2 The council has prepared and published a biodiversity plan | Yes | [Environment (Wales) Act 2016, Section 6](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2016/3/section/6/enacted)  Councils have a duty to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of its functions, and must prepare and publish a plan setting out what it proposes to do and report on the actions taken to improve biodiversity and promote ecosystem resilience every three years.  See [Environment (Wales) Act 2016 Part 1: Guidance for Section 6 – the Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty Frequently Asked Questions](https://gov.wales/section-6-biodiversity-and-resilience-ecosystems-duty-frequently-asked-questions) | Three year review due autumn 2022 |
| A.3 The council has completed an annual report on progress in meeting objectives contained in the local well-being plan | No | [Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2015/2/contents/enacted) – [Section 40](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2015/2/section/40/enacted) places a duty on certain community and town councils to take all reasonable steps towards meeting the objectives included in the local well-being plan that has effect in their areas. A community or town council is subject to that duty only if its gross income or expenditure was at least £200,000 for each of the three financial years preceding the year in which the local well-being plan is published. | Section 40 duty does not apply as council is below the financial threshold |
| A.4 The council has prepared an annual report | Yes | [Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 – Section 52](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asc/2021/1/part/3/chapter/5/enacted) From April 2022 community and town councils have a duty to prepare and publish a report about the council’s priorities, activities and achievements. [Statutory guidance](https://gov.wales/local-government-and-elections-wales-act-2021-statutory-guidance-community-and-town-councils) has been issued on the duty to prepare and publish an annual report. | Annual report published in April 2022 |

## Theme A – Vision, purpose and community planning – Summary of actions

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Summary of actions** | **By who** | **By when** |
| * A1 Discussion required re business plan | * Initially council but maybe delegated to working group | * To be determined |

## **Theme B – Leadership and people**

The council should respect the values of openness and transparency and adhere to, and model, the behaviours and standards set for all councillors as contained in the code of conduct. In leading its community, the council should be committed to enhancing its capability and capacity as is commensurate with its range and scale of operations.

Employees are the principal asset of any council and it is important that they are given the trust and respect to perform their roles to their maximum ability within a safe working environment. Training and development of employees is vitally important as well as having appropriate systems in place to provide adequate reward, recognition and accountability within a framework of effective employment policies.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Statutory obligation** |

| **Theme B – Leadership and people** | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Statement** | **In place (Yes/No)** | **Further information** | **Comments and actions** |
| **The council provides leadership to its members and staff** | | | |
| B.1 The council has adopted a code of conduct | Yes | [The Code of Conduct for members of local authorities in Wales: Guidance from the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales](https://www.ombudsman.wales/information-for-elected-members/)  The council should formally record in minutes that they have adopted a code of conduct based on the model code of conduct. |  |
| B.2 All councillors have signed a formal declaration of acceptance of office | Yes | A formal declaration of acceptance of office must be signed before an individual is able to act as a member of a community and town council. |  |
| B.3 All councillors have been provided with a copy of the council’s adopted code of conduct | Yes |  |  |
| B.4 All councillors have a council email address or a separate email address for council business | No |  | Members have been advised to set up a separate free email address for council business (note 4 Members use CCBC business account but other 8 currently using personal accounts) |
| B.5 All councillors have received training on their role and training needs are regularly reviewed | No | One Voice Wales, Planning Aid Wales and principal councils provide a range of opportunities for training of members in relation to their roles. The council should develop a training plan and maintain a record of training received. | 10 out of 12 attended Induction.  Self assessment questionnaire issued to identify training needs. 4 out of 12 have responded |
| B.6 All payments to councillors are made in line with the levels set out by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales | Yes | [The Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Annual report and guidance on payments to elected members](https://gov.wales/independent-remuneration-panel-wales) is available on its website. | Payments are made automatically unless individuals confirm in writing they wish to opt out |
| B.7 A statement of payments to councillors is published by 30 September each year detailing payments made to elected members in the previous municipal year | Yes | Community and town councils must publish a statement of payments detailing all payments made to elected members in the previous municipal year. Nil returns must also be reported. See [Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales guidance.](https://gov.wales/payments-elected-members/community-and-town-councils) | Published on website and return sent to WG |
| **The council carries out its employment duties** | | | |
| B.8 All employees have a written employment contract setting out the terms of their employment | Yes | [See ACAS – What an employment contract is](https://www.acas.org.uk/what-an-employment-contract-is)  One Voice Wales and SLCC have model contracts of employment for clerks which are available to members. |  |
| B.9 All employees have an up-to-date job description | Yes | One Voice Wales and SLCC can provide guidance to member councils in relation to the preparation of a job description and person specification. | Possible review and update |
| B.10 Any changes to terms and conditions, including salary increments, are recorded and approved by the council | Yes | Councils must ensure that all changes to terms and conditions are properly approved and recorded. | Both employees are top of scale. Pay awards subject to council approval |
| B.11 All staff have been given a copy of the employee code of conduct | No | [The Code of Conduct (Qualifying Local Government Employees) (Wales) Order 2001](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2001/2280/made) | No employee code of conduct. Council may wish to adopt employee code of conduct based on national guidance for local government |
| B.12 The council has core employment policies in place, for example:-   * Adoption and Paternity Policy * Alcohol, Drugs and Substance Misuse Policy * Annual Leave Policy * Appraisal Scheme * Bullying and Harassment * Capability Policy * Code of Conduct for Employees * Dignity at Work Policy * Discipline and Grievance Policy and Procedure * Equality and Diversity Policy * Health and Safety at Work Policy * Maternity Leave Policy * Member / Officer Relations Protocol * Recruitment * Procedure * Shared Parental Leave Policy * Attendance Management Policy * Stress Management Policy * Time off in Lieu Policy * Training Policy * Whistleblowing Policy | No | One Voice Wales and SLCC can provide member councils with a suite of policies and procedures.  The [ACAS website](https://www.acas.org.uk/advice) also contains a range of model policies and procedures | The council employs 0.7 FTE. It would be overkill to have all these policies. A simpler approach is to apply the model policies from ACAS or use CCBC policies as guide when the need arises. No issues have arisen in the last five years where any of these policies have been required.  Due to working practices there is a Lone Worker Policy Statement as a result of a security incident in the Twyn CC |
| B.13 The council is registered as an employer with HMRC | Yes | All councils must operate PAYE unless no staff:-   * earn above the lower national insurance threshold; **and** * have any other source of income.   In practice, this means that very few clerks, even of small councils, will fail to be exempt from PAYE. Other sources of income include income from pensions as well as other employments.  See [GOV.UK PAYE and payroll for employers](https://www.gov.uk/paye-for-employers) | The council payroll is operated inhouse using Sage software |
| B.14 All overtime payments are paid through the normal payroll process and subject to PAYE | Yes | All additions to salary must be subject to PAYE | There have been no overtime payments in the last five years, but if there are any in the future the will be processed through the payroll |
| B.15 Any additional allowances paid to staff are subject to tax where appropriate | Yes | Fixed sum allowances for home working are limited by [HMRC](https://www.gov.uk/tax-relief-for-employees/working-at-home). Payments above this amount are taxable and should be taxed through PAYE or entered onto a P11D return. Mileage payments are also subject to tax when they exceed mileage allowances specified by HMRC – currently 45p per mile. | Currently there are no additional allowances paid to staff |
| B.16 The council complies with pensions legislation | Yes | See [The Pensions Regulator](https://www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk/en) website | The council contributes towards the pension of the Admin Assistant through Nest. |
| **The council gives its staff the resources and support to carry out their role** | | | |
| B.17 All staff have received appropriate training for their role | Yes | The council [must](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asc/2021/1/section/67/enacted) develop a [training plan](https://gov.wales/local-government-and-elections-wales-act-2021-statutory-guidance-community-and-town-councils) and maintain a record of training received. | On the job for Admin Ass, Town Clerk particates in SLCC events and courses |
| B.18 All staff have council email addresses and access to council IT systems | Yes | Council staff should not use personal email addresses for council communications, or save council documents to personal computers, for reasons of information security. | Only one email address for council used by staff. Council has been dependent on CCBC for IT but is migrating to independent system with investment in own broadband service and use of laptops rather than desktop pcs  which reflects change to homeworking |

## Theme B – Leadership and people – Summary of actions

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Summary of actions** | **By who** | **By when** |
| * B4 * B5 * B11 * B12 | * Members to follow advice given and set up separate email account for council business * Outstanding self assessment questionnaires to be completed by Members * Council to adopt employee code of conduct from CCBC * Council to pass resolution to use either ACAS model policies or CCBC HR policies as guide to decision making when required | * By end of July 2022 * By end of July 2022 * At September 2022 Town Council * Resolution at September 2022 Town Council |

## **Theme C – Community engagement and partnerships**

Community and town councils play an active role in engaging, involving and consulting with their communities. An effective council understands its community’s (people and places) needs and desires, and knows the positive difference it is making. Councils should aim to ensure that no one feels disadvantaged, and that all groups within the community are engaged.

A partnership is an agreement to do something together that will benefit all involved, bringing results that could not be achieved by a single partner operating alone and reducing duplication of efforts. Partnership working allows services to be delivered in a joined-up way, such as through shared goals and/or sharing resources.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Statutory obligation** |

| **Theme C – Community engagement and partnerships** | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Statement** | **In place (Yes/No)** | **Further information** | **Comments and actions** |
| **The council engages with its community** | | | |
| C.1 The council has an agreed community engagement strategy | No | A community engagement strategy sets out how the council will understand its community, involve the community in their work and communicate with their electors. | Separate strategy may not be necessary if business plan is produced which could include this as a component |
| C.2 The community engagement strategy is reviewed periodically | No |  | The business plan would be reviewed annually |
| C.3 The council complies with the requirements of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 | Yes | The council is expected to treat the Welsh language reasonably and proportionately in its dealing with the public.  A scheme endorsed by the Welsh Language Commissioner sets out the principle, context and use of the Welsh Language and how it is applied to council activities and in the workplace.  [Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/mwa/2011/1/contents), [Part 4 Chapter 1: Duty to comply with standards](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/mwa/2011/1/part/4/chapter/1) –  [Welsh Language Commissioner – The Welsh Language Measure](https://www.welshlanguagecommissioner.wales/about-us/the-welsh-language-measure) : | Commenced building the Welsh side of the website but progress has stalled. More structured approach required to translation. |
| C.4 The council makes provision to translate documents when required | Yes |  | Currently only on demand, council agendas only published on website in English |
| **The council communicates with its partners and community** | | | |
| C.5 The council has an electronic presence / website | Yes | A community or town council must make certain information available electronically as set out in the [Local Government (Democracy) Wales Act 2013 section 55](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2013/4/section/55) and associated guidance. |  |
| C.6 The council publishes electronically   1. Information on how to contact it and, if different, its clerk including—  * a telephone number * a postal address * an email address  1. information about each of its members, including—  * the member’s name * how the member may be contacted * the member’s party affiliation (if any) * the ward which the member represents (where relevant) * any office of the council held by the member * any committee of the council to which the member belongs  1. the minutes of the proceedings of the council’s meetings and (in so far as is reasonably practicable) any documents which are referred to in the minutes 2. any audited statement of the council’s accounts | Yes | See Welsh Government [Statutory Guidance: Access to Information on Community and Town Councils](https://gov.wales/access-information-guidance-community-and-town-councils)  [Schedule 4 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asc/2021/1/schedule/4/enacted) includes changes to the Local Government Act 1972 relating to community council notices e.g. giving notice of meetings and their arrangements and the issuing of a short note within 7 days of council meetings. These should be read in conjunction with section 55 of the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013, which requires community councils to make available electronically certain information and documents (including minutes of meetings). | Full compliance with information that has to be published electronically |
| C.7 The council has a social media policy published on its website | No |  | Proposal for a social media presence has been considered, put in abeyance due to lack of staff capacity. Political groups have their own arrangements |
| C.8 The council has an agreed process for handling complaints which is published on its website | Yes | See model complaints handling process available from the [Complaints Standards Authority](https://www.ombudsman.wales/complaints-standards-authority/)  [Public Services Ombudsman Wales](https://www.ombudsman.wales/) has legal powers to look into complaints about public services | Complaints policy and procedure published on website |

## Theme C – Community engagements and partnerships – Summary of actions

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Summary of actions** | **By who** | **By when** |
| * C1 /C2 possibly link with A1 * C7 recommend no further action as no capacity to maintain social media presence | * Members need to give their views before determining course of action | * To be determined |

## **Theme D – Business processes**

A process is a series of actions or steps taken to achieve a particular end. A well-run and well-managed council will have clearly defined processes in place for key areas of business. These processes give an overall structure for decision-making designed to:

* ensure compliance with legislative requirements;
* deliver consistent outcomes or results; and
* mitigate against risk by ensuring tasks are performed correctly.

Business processes are likely to be key indicators of the strength of financial management and governance arrangements of a community or town council. The following will support your council to reflect on areas where typically a council has established processes in place, and help you determine if you need to introduce new or different processes.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Statutory obligation** |

| **Theme D – Business processes** | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Statement** | **In place (Yes/No)** | **Further information** | **Comments and actions** |
| **The council operates high standards of accountability and governance in an open and transparent way** | | | |
| D.1 The council has a set of standing orders to help govern the conduct of meetings, which is published on its website | Yes | Councils are subject to arrangements relating to the conduct of meetings and making decisions as set out in the [Local Government Act 1972](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1972/70/contents), in particular [Schedule 12](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1972/70/schedule/12). The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 made amendments to Schedule 12 of the 1972 Act which councils will also need to be aware of, see in particular [Schedule 4 to the 2021 Act](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asc/2021/1/schedule/4/enacted). In addition, it is strongly recommended that a council has its own standing orders. One Voice Wales and SLCC can provide model standing orders to member councils. Councils **must** have standing orders with respect to contracts for the supply of goods and materials or the execution of works (see [Local Government Act 1972, s135](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1972/70/section/135)). |  |
| D.2 Councillors’ declarations of personal and prejudicial interests are recorded in the minutes and published on a separate rolling register on its website | Yes | See [The Code of Conduct for members of local authorities in Wales: Guidance from the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales](https://www.ombudsman.wales/information-for-elected-members/) | Declarations of interest are recorded in the minutes in relation to agenda items. To avoid the need for a separate rolling register Members are asked to complete a Register of Interest Form at the start of the new administration which is published on the website. Only 6 out of 12 have completed the form |
| D.3 The council has published a schedule of meetings on its website | Yes | Having an annual cycle of council and committee meetings in place to expedite business arrangements supports local democracy and demonstrates transparency and public accountability. | Meeting date for next meeting confirmed on website |
| D.4 The council holds an annual meeting in May | Yes | See [Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12, Part IV, section 23](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1972/70/schedule/12/paragraph/23)  Note also the duty to hold an annual meeting within 14 days of an ordinary election of community councillors.  The chairman should sign a declaration of acceptance of office. | Appointment of Mayor and declaration of acceptance of office included on agenda |
| D.5 The council has clearly defined terms of reference (as appropriate) in place where it discharges functions to standing committees. The terms of reference should be published on the council’s website | Yes | See [Local Government Act 1972 section 101](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1972/70/section/101) | There are no standing committees. If any are proposed in the future terms of reference will be agreed and published on website |
| D.6 The council publishes all agendas and supporting background papers on its website at least three clear days before the meeting. | Yes | See [Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12, Part IV, section 26](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1972/70/schedule/12/part/IV) | Current practice is to publish on 7 days before council meeting |
| D.7 Councillors are served with a summons and receive copies of agenda papers and draft minutes at least three clear days before the meeting | Yes | See [Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12, Part IV, section 26](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1972/70/schedule/12/part/IV) | Documents are issued electronically |
| D.8 Members of the press and public are permitted access to council meetings and are supplied with copies of the agenda papers | Yes | See [Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Eliz2/8-9/67/contents), and amendments to that Act provided for in [Schedule 4 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asc/2021/1/schedule/4/paragraph/5/enacted) | Meetings are multi location and request can be made for video link to join meet remotely |
| D.9 The council publishes all council / committee / subcommittee minutes on its website | Yes | See Welsh Government [Statutory Guidance: Access to Information on Community and Town Councils](https://gov.wales/access-information-guidance-community-and-town-councils)  [Schedule 4 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asc/2021/1/schedule/4/enacted) includes changes to the Local Government Act 1972 relating to community council notices e.g. giving notice of meetings and their arrangements and the issuing of a short note within 7 days of council meetings. These should be read in conjunction with section 55 of the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013, which requires community councils to make available electronically certain information and documents (including minutes of meetings). | Minutes of council meetings are published within 2 to 3 days on website |
| D.10 The council makes and publishes arrangements for multi-location attendance at community and town council meetings | Yes | See [Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 section 47](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asc/2021/1/section/47/enacted) and chapter 2 of [The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021: Statutory Guidance for Community and Town Councils](https://gov.wales/local-government-and-elections-wales-act-2021-statutory-guidance-community-and-town-councils) |  |
| D.11 The council has approved scheme of delegations to committees and the clerk and these are published on its website | Yes | These must provide clear terms of reference for areas of responsibilities for committees and to facilitate the clerk taking urgent decisions between the cycles of meetings. | There are no committees. Delegations to the Clerk are included within Standing Orders and Financial Regulations |
| D.12 The council has a documented constitution describing its general governance arrangements | No | A council constitution sets out the rules governing the council’s business and how it operates and enhances local accountability and transparency.  An example of a council constitution can be found on [Llanelli Rural Council’s website.](https://www.llanelli-rural.gov.uk/governance/constitution/) | Where Standing Orders are silent CCBC constitution will be use as a guide to procedural matters |
| D.13 The council produces and approves an annual business plan | No |  | See comments under A1 |
| D.14 The council has a freedom of information publication scheme | Yes | The council must have documentation in place in order to comply with the [Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Duty to have a publication scheme](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/part/I/crossheading/publication-schemes)  The Information Commissioner’s Office has produced a [Freedom of Information self-assessment toolkit](https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/foi-self-assessment-toolkit/) | Published on website |
| D.15 The council has a current information and data protection policy, which is published on its website. | Yes | The council must comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation 2018 (GDPR). The Information Commissioner’s Office has published a [guide to Data Protection](https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/) and a [guide to GDPR](https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/) on its website.  The Information Commissioner’s Office has a [checklist to help comply with data protection responsibilities](https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/sme-web-hub/checklists/data-protection-self-assessment/)  The Information Commissioner has produced a checklist [‘How secure is your personal data?’](https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/sme-web-hub/checklists/how-secure-is-your-personal-data/) |  |
| D.16 The council has completed and met the requirements of the Information Commissioner’s data protection self-assessment checklist for organisations | Yes | A [Data protection self-assessment](https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/sme-web-hub/checklists/data-protection-self-assessment/) is available on the Information Commissioner’s Office website. |  |
| D.17 The council has a current IT Information Security Policy, which has been issued to councillors and staff | No |  | Cyber security is high risk on the risk register and members and staff are alerted to scams and phishing attacks. Council does not supply Members with IT equipment |
| D.18 The council has a suite of privacy notices published on its website, email communications and other forms of client correspondence | Yes | Model policies and privacy notices available to members from One Voice Wales and the SLCC. |  |
| D.19 The council has performed a data audit to assess what information it holds | Yes |  | Carried out by Clerk on appointment and filing rationalised |
| D.20 The council has a document retention policy published on its website | No |  |  |
| D.21 The council periodically purges information which it no longer needs to keep | Yes |  | Purge carried out by Clerk on appointment |
| D.22 The council keeps information disposal records | No |  |  |
| D.23 The council has published an accessibility statement on its website and undertakes periodic reviews to ensure that the website remains compliant | No | See [The Public Sector (Websites and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations 2018](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2018/952/contents/made)  See [Understanding accessibility requirements for public sector bodies](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/accessibility-requirements-for-public-sector-websites-and-apps) | Website was completely redesigned to be compliant with Accessibility Regulations but statement may need to be added |
| D.24 The council has a business continuity plan to help it continue to function should it encounter loss or damage to property | No | One Voice Wales can supply a selection of model policies to member councils on a consultancy basis. | The council owns no land or property and has limited assets |
| D.25 The council has an emergency plan to help support community resilience and which has been shared with the Emergency Planning Authority | No |  | The council has limited resources and operates only a few functions. Emergency plan to support community resilience is not practical. The council can make charitable donations to organisations that may be assisting residents in the town affected by unforeseen events eg pandemic |
| **The council fulfils its duties and responsibilities in regard to health, safety and welfare** | | | |
| D.26 The council has an extant Health and Safety Policy Statement and associated procedures | No | Employers must:  Provide a safe working environment for employees and all other persons affected by its actions, including contractors and members of the public.  Employees must:  Act in accordance with the council’s Health and Safety policy and supporting procedures and comply with all statutory regulations and Health and Safety legal requirements.  See [Health and Safety Executive website](https://www.hse.gov.uk/index.htm) | The need for a safe working environment has been the subject of reports which led to the Lone Worker Policy and enhanced security measures to the office.  Council rents space in the Twyn CC and health and safety of the building is not the responsibility of the council. Scope for a policy is limited.  Health and safety is part of the risk assessment for council organised events |
| D.27 There is an annual budget in place to meet health and safety requirements | No |  | Any cost implications that arise are met on ad hoc basis from budget savings or reserves eg office door security |
| D.28 The council has documented risk assessments in place and performs regular reviews (at least annually) of all its risk assessments to identify hazards and the adequacy of existing control measures across all activities and service areas | Yes |  | The council has a risk register that is subject to annual review. Separate risk assessments undertaken for council organised events |
| D.29 The council has developed internal systems to manage the control measures set out in the risk assessments relating to council property and activities, and produces an annual action plan which is reviewed and reported to council | No |  | The council owns no land or buildings so action plan would be considered unnecessary. |
| D.30 The council has an accident report book and related investigation procedures | No |  | Any accidents would be documented separately. There have been none in the last five years |
| D.31 The council has a stress management policy | No |  |  |
| D.32 The council has a stress risk assessment | No |  |  |
| D.33 The council facilitates and controls community events and has an events management plan to consistently regulate event activities safely | No |  | This activity is undertaken by CCBC through ESAG |
| **The council understands how to manage its assets and facilities** | | | |
| D.34 The council maintains a register of its assets | Yes | [The Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014, regulation 6,](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2014/3362/regulation/6/made) requires the council to keep a record of all assets and liabilities held by the council. | Updated annually to take account of new purchases and write offs |
| D.35 The council periodically examines and risk assesses its assets and prepares maintenance / repair plans | No | Councils need to ensure that their community based assets are safe for use by councillors, officers and the public. | Not applicable as the council owns no land or buildings |
| D.36 The council prepares a business case before entering into the acquisition of large value assets | Yes | Councils should ensure that they fully understand the implications and effects of acquiring assets. These may incur ongoing maintenance and running costs and may require the council to borrow money to finance the projects.  Welsh Government guidance - [Borrowing approvals: guidance for community and town councils](https://gov.wales/borrowing-approvals-guidance-community-and-town-councils-html) | The council would undertake a business case but is not currently considering the acquisition of large value assets |
| D.37 The council has adequate insurance cover to protect employees, buildings, other property, cash and members of the public. | Yes | Insurance must be in place to cover employees, members of the public, all buildings, contents and events.  Insurance documents should be circulated and approved by full council.  Certificates of insurance must be displayed in a prominent position at all council premises. | Insurance including public and employee liability renewed annually on 1st June |

## Theme D – Business processes – Summary of actions

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Summary of actions** | **By who** | **By when** |
| * D13 to be considered in conjunction with A1 * D12,D17,D25,D27,D29,D30,D31,D32,D33,D35 not considered necessary or appropriate for council * D20,D22 prepare document retention policy and information disposal record * D33 publish accessibility statement * D24 produce business continuity plan relating incapacity of Clerk * D26 prepare Health and Safety Policy Statement | By Town Clerk  By Town Clerk  Clerk / Council  Clerk/ Council | January 2023  October 2022  November 2022  January 2023 |

## **Theme E – Resources and financial management**

Community and town councils are entrusted with management of public funds and assets. All councils should have appropriate financial governance arrangements in place to ensure the security of these resources and to ensure that they achieve economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of those resources.

This theme considers the arrangements the council has put in place to manage its resources and covers both assets held and the council’s finances. The questions here will provide confidence that the statutory and non-statutory procedures for good financial management are in place, or highlight areas where the council needs to make improvements.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Statutory obligation** |

| **Theme E – Resources and financial management** | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Statement** | **In place (Yes/No)** | **Further information** | **Comments** |
| **The council has suitable accounting and audit systems** | | | |
| E.1 The council has a formally appointed responsible financial officer | Yes | [Local Government Act 1972 section 151](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1972/70/section/151) requires the council to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to secure that one of its officers, the responsible finance officer, has responsibility for administration of those affairs.  See chapter 4 of [Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in Wales – A Practitioners Guide](http://www.onevoicewales.org.uk/OVWWeb/UserFiles/Files/Front%20Page/Governance%20and%20Accountability%20A%20Practitioners%20Guide%20Wales%202019.pdf) for further guidance. | Town Clerk is the section 151 officer (RFO) |
| E.2 The council has a complete and up to date ledger/cashbook | Yes | [Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/cy/wsi/2014/3362/regulation/6/made) - regulation 6requires the Council’s accounting records to:  (a) be sufficient to show and explain a relevant body's transactions and to enable the responsible financial officer to prepare the accounting statements; and  (b) contain—  (i) entries from day to day of all sums of money received and expended by the body and the matters to which the income and expenditure or receipts and payments accounts relate;  (ii) a record of the assets and liabilities of the body; and  (iii) a record of income and expenditure of the body in relation to claims made, or to be made, by it for contribution, grant or subsidy. | Clerk maintains up to date income and expenditure account and monthly reconciliation against bank statement |
| E.3 The council has clearly documented accounting procedures including any segregation of duties and a schedule of key records | Yes | [The Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/cy/wsi/2014/3362/regulation/6/made) require the responsible financial officer to determine the council’s accounting control systems and ensure that the accounting control systems are observed.  The accounting control systems must include—  (a) measures to ensure that financial transactions are recorded as soon as reasonably practicable and as accurately as reasonably possible, measures to enable the prevention and detection of inaccuracies and fraud, and the ability to reconstitute any lost records;  (b) identification of the duties of officers dealing with financial transactions and division of responsibilities of those officers in relation to significant transactions;  (c) procedures to ensure that uncollectable amounts, including bad debts, are not written off except with the approval of the responsible financial officer, or such member of that person's staff as is nominated for this purpose, and that the approval is shown in the accounting record; and  (d) measures to ensure that risk is appropriately managed | Council has approved Financial Regulations which are periodically reviewed |
| E.4 The council has a schedule of its key accounting records | Yes | Councils should ensure that they are fully aware of all key accounting records including for example, burial register, cheque books, invoices, payroll records, contracts (including employment contracts) |  |
| E.5 There are documented arrangements for transfer of documents on change of responsible financial officer | No | Councils must ensure that all accounting records including contracts, payroll records, invoices etc are held securely and proper arrangements are in place for the transfer of records on changes in the clerk/responsible financial officer. This is particularly important where the council does not have its own office.  The council’s copy of the clerk’s employment contract should not be retained by the clerk where the council does not have its own office. | Arrangements not documented but Clerk aware of what needs to be transferred to new RFO |
| E.6 The council has and monitors a record of its earmarked reserves and balances and ensures that precept is not raised unnecessarily | Yes | See [Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in Wales – A practitioners guide (2019 Edition)](http://www.onevoicewales.org.uk/OVWWeb/UserFiles/Files/Front%20Page/Governance%20and%20Accountability%20A%20Practitioners%20Guide%20Wales%202019.pdf) chapter 22 for guidance | Quarterly budget monitoring reports presented to council |
| E.7 There is an agreed timetable for the preparation and approval of the Annual Return/statement of accounts | Yes | Preparing and agreeing a timetable for the preparation and approval of the annual return will enable the council to meet the statutory approval date of 30 June each year. Documenting these arrangements also assists in handover of responsibilities between outgoing and incoming responsible financial officers. | April year end accounts, followed by internal audit. May accounting statements approved by council and submitted to Audit Wales prior to deadline |
| E.8 The approval of the Annual Return is a set agenda item on the council meeting schedule to be approved by 30 June | Yes | See [The Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014, regulation 15](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2014/3362/regulation/15/made)  Members will need to be mindful of the statutory timetable for approving the accounts and where the statutory dates are not met, establish why there is a delay and make arrangements to approve the accounts as soon as possible thereafter.  Members must receive the full annual return 3 days before the meeting.  The Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 requires that the council as a whole approve the accounting statements (contained in the Annual Return) |  |
| E.9 Councillors receive appropriate evidence to support the governance assertions made in the annual governance statement as included in the annual return | Yes | Councils should not approve the annual return until they are satisfied that the assertions made in the annual governance statement are supported by sufficient evidence to justify the answers given. |  |
| E.10 The council has a risk register which is reviewed at least annually | Yes | See [Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in Wales – A practitioners guide (2019 Edition)](http://www.onevoicewales.org.uk/OVWWeb/UserFiles/Files/Front%20Page/Governance%20and%20Accountability%20A%20Practitioners%20Guide%20Wales%202019.pdf) chapter 9 for guidance  The council should have a risk management scheme which highlights every significant risk in terms of the council’s activities and makes clear how such risks will be managed. This includes investing in adequate insurance to protect employees, buildings, cash and members of the public. |  |
| E.11 Appointment of the internal auditor and internal audit terms of reference are approved by the council | Yes | See [Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in Wales – A practitioners guide (2019 Edition)](http://www.onevoicewales.org.uk/OVWWeb/UserFiles/Files/Front%20Page/Governance%20and%20Accountability%20A%20Practitioners%20Guide%20Wales%202019.pdf) – chapter 11 and appendix 2 |  |
| E.12 The effectiveness of internal audit is reviewed at least once in each year | Yes | [Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2014/3362/regulation/7/made) - regulation 7 requires that the council maintain an adequate and effective system of internal audit. |  |
| E.13 Councillors examine the audit pack to be sent to the Auditor General for Wales to confirm the accuracy of the information provided | Yes |  | Report to council to sign off accounting statements outlines all information to be submitted to Audit Wales |
| E.14 The rights of the public in relation to the accounts are advertised at the appropriate times | Yes | See  [Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2014/3362/regulation/17/made) – regulation 17 |  |
| E.15 The council allows inspection of the annual return or statement of accounts and the supporting accounting records and other documents once the statement of accounts has been approved by the council | Yes | See [Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2014/3362/regulation/17/made) – regulation 17 |  |
| E.16 Councillors receive a copy of the Auditor General’s final audit report and a copy of the Auditor General for Wales’ certified annual return | Yes | The council should ensure they are aware of the outcome of the statutory audit and any issues identified so that its arrangements can be improved or errors corrected for future years | Any issues identified are reported to council |
| E.17 The statement of accounts is published after the annual external audit, together with the auditor’s report | Yes | See [Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2014/3362/regulation/18/made) – regulation 18 |  |
| **The council has suitable financial management and financial assistance processes** | | | |
| E.18 The council prepares a detailed budget each year prior to setting the precept | Yes | The [Local Government Finance Act 1992](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1992/14/section/50) section 50 requires the council to calculate its budget requirement for the year and specifies how the budget requirement is to be calculated  See [Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in Wales – A practitioners guide (2019 Edition)](http://www.onevoicewales.org.uk/OVWWeb/UserFiles/Files/Front%20Page/Governance%20and%20Accountability%20A%20Practitioners%20Guide%20Wales%202019.pdf) – chapter 6 | Budget estimates for following financial year reported in November and precept approved, may be deferred to January if adjustments to budget are required |
| E.19 The budget and the precept requirement are approved by the council | Yes |  |  |
| E.20 The council receives periodic (monthly/quarterly) reports comparing income and expenditure against the approved budget, and where there are differences between actual and budget figures, the council ensures it receives detailed explanations of the differences | Yes | Regular monitoring of income and expenditure can help councils to identify financial issues before they become problems. |  |
| E.21 The council receives and reviews periodic (monthly/quarterly) bank reconciliations | Yes | The bank reconciliation is an important internal control as it provides evidence of the completeness and accuracy of the amounts recorded in the council’s accounting records. Reconciliations should be prepared whenever a bank statement is received and should be reviewed to confirm they have been properly prepared. Reviewers should seek evidence and explanations for reconciling items. | Account balances reported to council monthly and reconciliation issues would be reported if any identified when matching cash book to bank statement |
| E.22 Welsh Government consent is obtained before entering into long term borrowing to finance capital expenditure | Yes | Councils must obtain Welsh Government consent before entering into long term borrowing arrangements.  Welsh Government publishes [guidance](https://gov.wales/borrowing-approvals-guidance-community-and-town-councils-html) on applying for borrowing approvals and an [application form](https://gov.wales/borrowing-approvals-application-form-community-and-town-councils) on its website. | This would happen but the council has not taken any long tern borrowing and currently has no plans to do so |
| E.23 Arrangements are in place for internal audit of the council’s accounting records and of its system of internal control, and for receipt of the internal audit report prior to the council’s approval of the annual return | Yes | [Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2014/3362/regulation/7/made) - regulation 7 requires that the council maintain an adequate and effective system of internal audit. |  |
| E.24 Standing orders are in place specifically for the procurement of the supply of goods, materials, works and services | Yes | [Local Government Act 1972](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1972/70/section/135) section 135 requires all councils to make standing orders covering contracts for the supply of goods, materials and the execution of works.  The standing orders must make provision to secure competition and to regulate the way in which tenders are invited. Section 135 of the Local Government Act 1972 allows for small contracts to be exempt and to make an exemption in a particular case.  One Voice Wales and SLCCcan provide model standing orders to members. |  |
| E.25 The council reviews procurement thresholds in its standing orders and financial regulations to ensure they remain relevant | Yes | Model standing orders and financial regulations need to be tailored to fit the needs of the council. |  |
| E.26 Significant items of expenditure and all contracts are reviewed to ensure compliance with the standing orders / financial regulations | Yes |  | Significant items of expenditure subject of separate reports or part of budget estimates and quarterly monitoring |
| E.27 Exemptions to the standing orders / financial regulations are only applied in exceptional circumstances | Yes | Standing orders / financial regulations must be followed as a matter of course, any exceptions are expected to be rare and the reasons for departure should be documented / recorded in the minutes of the council. |  |
| E.28 Documented procedures are in place for making payments to third parties and employees | Yes | The council should have clearly documented procedures for authorising and making payments. This is required to ensure:   * Bank accounts are only opened with consent of the council * Direct debits and standing orders are properly authorised * Appropriate authorisation limits and procedures are in place to ensure that only approved payments are made * Access to council funds is safeguarded in case of departure of members/officers |  |
| E.29 Payments are periodically reviewed to ensure that the appropriate procedures have been followed | Yes | Independent review of payments processes is an important control to limit the risk of fraud or other error arising. | Members can undertake a select account review at random chosen from schedule of payments reported monthly |
| E.30 The establishment and ongoing payments made by bank standing order/direct debit are monitored | Yes | Bank standing orders and direct debits result in an ongoing series of payments and the council should ensure that it understands what the payments are for and the current level of payments made. | Only two direct debits |
| E.31 There is a documented policy and procedure for the award of grants | Yes | Adoption of a policy and specified procedure for the award of grants will help councils to decide between competing requests for support. Councils can set key criteria for eligibility, limits on the assistance that may be awarded and specify evidence required to support applications for funds. It also provides a clear trail from the application to the award of grant. |  |
| E.32 The council calculates annually the maximum sum it is allowed to spend under the [section 137](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1972/70/section/137) power | Yes | The amount councils are permitted to spend is limited to a multiple of registered electors as at January immediately before the start of the financial year. Councils need to ensure that they do not spend more than the allowed sum. The allowable amount is published annually by Welsh Government.  Note - Once a council resolves itself an eligible community council, section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 no longer applies to the council. Unlike section 137 there is no financial limitation on what an eligible community council can spend if they are exercising the general power of competence. | The allowable amount published by WG is reported to the council |
| E.33 Before making a decision to award a grant for financial assistance, the council considers if the grant awarded is commensurate with the benefit that will be accrued to the community | Yes | [Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1972/70/section/137) requires that the financial assistance awarded is commensurate with the benefit accrued to the community.  Where the General Power of Competence is intended to be exercised, eligible community council must approve a business case in support of the proposal. See chapter 1 of [The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021: Statutory Guidance for Community and Town Councils](https://gov.wales/local-government-and-elections-wales-act-2021-statutory-guidance-community-and-town-councils) |  |
| E.34 Before making a decision to award a grant, the council considers if it has a specific power to incur the expenditure rather than applying the section 137 power, or if there is a statutory prohibition on making such a payment | Yes | The miscellaneous power cannot be applied to incur expenditure where there is an existing statutory provision that would allow the expenditure to be incurred. In addition these powers cannot be applied to circumvent a statutory prohibition on the expenditure being incurred. |  |
| E.35 The council keeps a separate account of all section 137 payments | Yes | See [section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1972/70/section/137) |  |

## Theme E – Resources and financial management – Summary of actions

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Summary of actions** | **By who** | **By when** |
| * E5 list documents to be handed over to a new RFO | * Town Clerk | * November 2022 |

## **Summary of all actions to be taken as a result of Part 1 – The health check**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Summary of key actions** | **By who** | **By when** |
| A1 discussion re strategy / business plan  B4  B5  B11  B12  C1/C2 link with A1  C7 no further action at this time as no staff capacity to maintain social media presence  D13 link with A1  D12, D17, D25, D27, D29, D30, D31, D32, D33, D35 considered unnecessary or inappropriate, no further action  D20, D22 prepare document retention policy and information disposal record  D33 publish accessibility statement (relates to website)  D24 produce business continuity plan primarily to address sudden unavailability of Town Clerk  D26 prepare Health and Safety Policy Statement to document action that is already undertaken  E5 list documents to handed over to a new RFO, link to D24 | Council, possible delegation to working group (political balance)  Members to follow advice and set up separate email account for council business  Outstanding self assessment questionnaire on training needs to be completed by Members  Council to adopt employee code of conduct from CCBC  Council to pass resolution to use either ACAS model policies or CCBC HR policies as guide to decision making when required  Members views required before determining course of action  Members views required before determining course of action  Town Clerk  Town Clerk  Town Clerk / Council  Town Clerk / Council  Town Clerk | To be determined  July 2022  July 2022  September 2022  September 2022  To be determined  To be determined  January 2023  October 2022  November 2022  January 2023  November 2022 |

**Agenda Item 8.4**

**Report to Town Council 26th September 2022**

**Events Working Group / CIL Working Group**

The notes of the Working Group held on 27th June 2022 are appended.

The Working Group has made a number of recommendations to the Town Council. Also note the update in relation to the Megaday event.

*Events*

Fireworks Display at Caerphilly Castle 5th November 2022

Due to safety concerns the alternative launch site within the Castle grounds is considered unsuitable for a major event.

**1 The Working Group recommends that the fireworks display does not take place in 2022.**

River of Light Lantern Parade

The proposal from CCBC for a single event of Christmas Market and Lantern Parade on the same date in December was discussed. There were no substantive comments on the proposal and it was felt worthwhile to combine the event to save costs and increase footfall for both the market and parade.

**2 The Working Group recommends that the detailed proposal for the organisation and management of the combined event from CCBC is endorsed.**

Sponsored Events 2022

The expenditure position and commitments against the budget were noted. Since the Working Group meeting a formal request for sponsorship of Megaday has been received. This is in line with the information given to Members at the Working Group. The event took place on 28th August 2022 and the Town Council has been invoiced for the £4000 which had been included within the budget. The organiser has indicated the Town Council sponsorship will be used to meet the cost of site hire, marquee hire, and bar hire.

**3 The Working Group recommends that £1000 sponsorship is offered to CCBC towards the running costs of the Little Cheese event on 3rd and 4th September 2022.** (Note agenda item 8.5 re confirmation of action)

**4 To note the Town Clerk has actioned the payment of the sponsorship for Megaday in the sum of £4000 as per the budget.**

*CIL Projects*

The project ideas were reviewed.

**5 The Working Group recommends that the memorial / plaque to Llewellyn Bren (1) is deleted, and priority is given to progressing the plaque recognising key workers during the pandemic (2) and the general waste and dog waste bins (4). It was agreed to support two new project ideas being added to the list of potential projects.**

* **Electric vehicle charge point in the car park at Caerphilly Miners**
* **Safety security fencing to the Castle Moat**

It has been suggested that the plaque for recognising the keyworkers could be placed on the Library. This will require consent from CCBC as the building owner. It is assumed this will be engraved brass, on a hardwood base and wall mounted. The description on the plaque in Welsh and English will need to be agreed in order that a quotation can be sought. Members views are invited on the following suggestion:

“Caerphilly Town Council gratefully acknowledges and thanks all those key workers for their dedication and unstinting support to the community during the pandemic of 2020-22”

In February 2021 the Town Council met with the Waste Strategy and Operations Supervisor, CCBC to discuss concerns about overflowing litter bins and dog waste bins and the emptying frequency. There was a wide ranging discussion on the operational issues, location and capacity of waste bins, problems with commercial waste bins and possible improvements. The resolutions from this meeting were:

1 To investigate the replacement of the pole mounted cast iron bins on Cardiff Road with larger suitable receptacles. (Subject to cost estimates it was indicated that the Town Council would consider funding this from CIL monies)

2 To review the location of the dog waste bins, any gaps in provision and whether they are in the best positions.

3 To encourage CCBC to reinstate education programmes as soon as possible

Following concerns raised at the Town Council meeting in June 2022 about the poor standard of cleansing in the town the Town Clerk has written to CCBC on this matter and raised the lack of progress on replacement / additional bins since the meeting in February 2021. Arrangements are in hand for the Waste and Strategy Operations Supervisor, CCBC to attend a meeting of the Town Council.

Phil Davy

Town Clerk

**Notes of the Events Working Group / CIL Working Group held by remote access on 27th June 2022**

**Present:**

Councillors M Downes, C Elsbury, C Lewis, M Prew, P Reed, D Roberts

**In Attendance:**

P G Davy, Town Clerk

*Events Working Group*

1 Fireworks Display at Caerphilly Castle 5th November 2022

The usual launch site at the horn work will not be available in 2022 due to the extensive conservation and building works at the Castle. An alternative site on the east side of the Castle below the curtain walls (Cardiff Road / Castle Street) had been suggested by Cadw. This location presented significant crowd control and traffic management issues. In light of the safety concerns the Working Group concluded this was not a practical location given the scale of the event. The Town Council had already resolved that if it was not possible to hold the fireworks display at the Castle an alternative site within the town would not be pursued.

The Working Group agreed to recommend that the event should not take place in 2022.

2 Christmas Lights Switch On 18th November 2022

The switch on event will take place at the Twyn which will involve a road closure. The local primary schools will be approached at the start of the autumn term in September to establish if they wish their choirs to perform. A new supplier is required for the PA system and it was agreed to obtain quotations from locally based companies.

3 River of Light Lantern Parade

The Lantern Parade is fully funded by the Town Council but is organised and managed by the Events Team at CCBC. The Working Group considered the proposal from CCBC for the Christmas Market and Lantern Parade forming a single event on the 3rd December and agreed to endorse the details setting out how the event would be managed.

4 Sponsored Events 2022 – Expenditure Update

An update was provided on the sponsored events budget. It was indicated that Megaday would be happening this year but the organisers had yet to formally request the sponsorship funding. Members advised that although the total amount of funding for this event would be unchanged it would be used to pay for different elements of the event. Councillor M Prew declared an interest in Megaday.

The new proprietor of Y galeri had not yet decided whether to run the Arts Competition.

CCBC had requested sponsorship funding for the Little Cheese event that will take place on

3rd and 4th September. As there is some headroom within the budget it was agreed to recommend that £1000 is allocated to the event.

*CIL Working Group*

The Working Group considered the current list of project ideas.

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 Seats to the north of Caerphilly Castle Moat.

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

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

It was agreed to recommend that no 1 should be dropped from the list and priority given to making progress with 2 and 4. It was considered the most appropriate location for a plaque under 2 would be the Library at the Twyn. In respect of 4 the Town Clerk had written to CCBC following discussion at the Town Council meeting in June on cleansing and waste litter concerns.

New project ideas that were suggested to be added:

* Electric vehicle charge point in the car park adjacent to Caerphilly Miners
* Security fencing to the Castle Moat

**Agenda Item 8.5**

**Report to Town Council 26th September 2022**

**Little Cheese – Confirmation of Action**

The Events Working Group on 27th June 2022 had considered a request from CCBC for sponsorship funding of the Little Cheese event that was planned for 3rd and 4th September 2022. The Working Group agreed to make a recommendation to the Town Council that £1000 should be offered. This recommendation would have been considered at the Town Council meeting scheduled for 18th July 2022. However the meeting was cancelled as a result of the amber weather warning for extreme heat and business held over to the next ordinary meeting of the Town Council on 19th September 2022. As this was after the date of the event the Town Clerk, following consultation with Members, informed CCBC that sponsorship of £1000 would be provided towards the costs of the Little Cheese event.

The report is for confirmation of action taken by the Town Clerk.

Phil Davy

Town Clerk

**Agenda Item 8.6**

**Report to Town Council 26th September 2022**

**Town Council Community Service Award Scheme**

A report was considered by the Town Council in September 2018 (see appendix) to establish a community service award scheme. It was agreed to proceed on the basis of a single annual award and the scheme was introduced during 2019 when nominations were invited. Although the response to the scheme was very limited the nominations that were received were considered under a confidential report in October 2019. Due to the particular submissions received it was decided to make an individual award and a group award for 2019. Arrangements were made to make a presentation in March 2020 on the same evening as the Mayor intended to present cheques to his charities. Unfortunately the presentation evening had to be abandoned due to the onset of the pandemic and the awards have remained in abeyance ever since. To be fair the intended recipients should receive their awards albeit belatedly and appropriate arrangements should be made for the Mayor to do this. Members are also invited to decide whether the annual award scheme should be reinstated for 2022 with a presentation in early 2023. This should be on the basis of the original decision, a single annual award.

Phil Davy

Town Council

**Appendix**

**Report to Town Council 17th September 2018**

**Town Council Community Service Award Scheme**

At the Town council meeting held on 16th July 2018 there was a request for consideration to be given to establishing a community service award scheme.

There are many town and community councils and parish councils in England that operate award schemes. Typically, they are often aligned with the AGM when the winners are announced and presentations made, but it can be a separate event. It may involve a single award to an individual. Alternatively there can be multiple award categories. The awards themselves may comprise a Civic Award badge and framed certificate. Usually it is about recognition for service to the community rather than any monetary award. Some awards may be sponsored with the sponsor’s name on the award.

Nominations can be made by the general public and Members of the Town Council (except that no Member can nominate themselves and no Member will be eligible to receive an award).

Option1

This would involve a single Civic Award that would be made to an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to the community. Although primarily for individuals the award could be given to a community or voluntary group which has made a positive difference.

Option2

This would involve different award categories. Examples could be:

* Civic Award for individuals
* Youth Award for individuals under 21
* Business Award for a business that has engaged with the community for the benefit of the town
* Community Award for a community group or local organisation that has achieved some significant benefit for the area

There are variations depending on the type of award / recognition required eg Lifetime Achievement, Volunteer of the Year, Creative Arts Achievement, Sporting Achievement, Mayor’s Award.

Publicity would need to be given to the Award(s) scheme and a selection panel would need to be established. There might be the possibility of attracting a sponsor for one or other awards if option 2 is pursued, in which case a representative of the sponsor should be on the selection panel.

The Award(s) can be promoted via the website, by Members using social media, and word of mouth. Nominations can be made by completing an online form on the website or printing

and submitting a hard copy. Once the closing date has passed entries will be checked by the Town Clerk to ensure the criteria are met and a selection panel will then be convened. Arrangements would then be made for a presentation by the Mayor.

Option 1 would be low cost and involve minimum administration and more limited time commitment from Members. Option 2 would have more administration and require a larger time commitment.

If Members are minded to introduce an award scheme it is recommended that this is on the basis of option 1, that is a single annual award and is introduced in 2019. If this proves successful consideration can be given to expanding the scheme in future years.

Phil Davy

Town Clerk

**Agenda Item 8.7**

**Report to Town Council 26th September 2022**

**Training Plan Draft**

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 section 67 requires town and community councils to make and publish a plan about the training provision for its members and staff. The first training plan must be published by 5th November 2022. The training plan should reflect on and address whether the council has the skills and knowledge it needs to deliver its plans most effectively. The primary purpose of the training plan is to support councillors to have the relevant training to carry out their role.

A draft Training Plan is appended for Members consideration.

It is recommended:

1 That Members indicate any additional content they would like to see incorporated within the Training Plan which will be presented to the October meeting for final approval in order that the Plan can be published on the website to meet the 5th November deadline.

2 That a financial allocation of £1000 is made available to fund training over the remainder of the financial year.

3 That the specific training priorities identified from the self assessment questionnaire are progressed with the respective individual Members by the Town Clerk and bookings made with One Voice Wales and /or Planning Aid Wales as appropriate.

4 Notwithstanding the Training Plan any Member can make a training support request through the Town Clerk where there will be a clear benefit in terms of the management and governance of the Town Council and the Town Clerk be delegated to make appropriate arrangements within the financial allocation under recommendation 2.

Phil Davy

Town Clerk

**Caerphilly Town Council**

**Training Plan**

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 introduced a statutory requirement for town and community councils to have a training plan for Members and staff (section 67). The intention behind this requirement is to support councillors with the relevant training to carry out their role. It is recognised that this should be carried out in a proportionate way, taking into account factors such as the activities undertaken by the council, and the current expertise of councillors and the clerk. The Town Council performs a limited range of functions and owns no land or buildings but notwithstanding Members need to be equipped to undertake their responsibilities which are set down in law. Training can take many forms and includes in person or remote access courses, webinars, attendance at conferences and seminars, in house briefings from the Town Clerk or representatives from other organisations, personal reading and research.

There are essential skills and knowledge that all councillors should have and to this end therefore all should attend the basic provision:

* Induction
* Code of Conduct
* Financial Management and Governance

Beyond these basics and to assess other priorities a self assessment questionnaire was issued to Members in May 2022. The purpose was to assess the skills and knowledge together with the coverage and depth. There was a limited response which has meant it has not been possible to build a complete picture. However the council benefits from Members who have extensive local government experience over many years, and experience gained from their respective careers in public and private roles, and one third of the Members are also Caerphilly County Borough Councillors which brings added benefits from a training perspective. Members who did respond to the self assessment questionnaire identified topics where they would like the opportunity of additional training.

Welcome packs were provided to all Members following the election in May 2022. Included in the packs were copies of the Register of Members Interests, the Code of Conduct, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations and the self assessment questionnaire.

The Town Clerk arranged an induction for all Members on 23rd May 2022 which was attended by 10 Members of the Town Council. This included an introduction to the council as a legal entity and to the governance provided through the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

Caerphilly County Borough Council will offer Code of Conduct training for town and community councils in September 2022. Any Member who hasn’t attended training on the Code of Conduct within the last 12 months will be encouraged to attend.

Feedback from Members suggests that the following are areas where Members would welcome training opportunities:

* Planning policies / planning applications
* Council as employer (HR policy and procedures)
* Local Government Law
* Local Government Finance
* Community engagement
* Climate change / biodiversity duty
* Governance
* Town/Community Councils Functions

The above topic areas can all be addressed either through the modules offered by One Voice Wales which are open to non member councils, or Planning Aid Wales.

**Staff Training**

The Town Clerk maintains up to date knowledge through membership of the Society of Local Council Clerks. From time to time remote access courses or webinars may be identified as an opportunity to get more detailed information. This could relate to topical issues that affect the running of the Town Council such as cyber security or legislation that imposes new duties on the sector.

Training for the Administrative Assistant is on the job.

When any new staff are recruited any training needs should be identified through a formal induction process.

**Volunteer Training**

The Town Council does not employ any regular volunteers. Volunteer stewards are appointed for the fireworks display and are briefed on the day and deployed in pairs to specific locations.

**Budget**

The estimates for 2022/23 financial year do not include any budget provision for training. Circumstances have changed with the new duty imposed by Welsh Government through the LGE(Wales) Act 2021. It is anticipated that savings may arise during 2022/23 and it is suggested that £1000 is approved in order to progress the specific training needs identified above in the current financial year. For future years a separate budget head will be established. Modules offered by One Voice Wales which are delivered remotely are charged at £55 for non members. Planning Aid Wales have an online session “An Introduction to Planning” specifically focused on the role of town and community councils in the planning system which costs £35 per place.

**Review**

The LGE (Wales) Act 2021 imposes a duty to review the training plan from time to time and as a minimum within 3 months of every ordinary election. However a more frequent review may be necessary if there is a change in circumstances such as following a by election or taking on new responsibilities.

Setting aside the formal review requirements a flexible approach will be maintained such that at any time Members can request support to pursue additional training where it can be demonstrated this will be a benefit to the management and governance of the council.

Approved October 2022

**Agenda Item 8.8**

**Report to Town Council 26th September 2022**

**Environment (Wales) Act 2016 – Biodiversity Statement Review**

Under section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 public authorities in Wales have a duty to maintain and enhance biodiversity and promote the resilience of ecosystems. To comply with the duty public authorities must prepare and publish a plan setting out what they propose to do to maintain and enhance biodiversity and promote resilience. The first plan had to be published by the end of 2019 and has to be reviewed every three years after this date. The review is now due.

Biodiversity refers to the variety of life found on earth. It includes all species of plants and animals and their abundance and genetic diversity. Ecosystems are functioning units made up of living organisms (plants, animals and micro organisms) in conjunction with their non living environment (air, water, minerals and soil) and all the diverse and complex interactions that take place between them.

Biodiversity underpins all lives and livelihoods and supports the functioning and resilience of ecosystems in oceans, wetlands, lakes, rivers, mountains, forests, and agricultural landscapes. However biodiversity faces huge threats from:

* Climate change
* Habitat loss
* Pollution
* Invasive species
* Overexploitation
* Epidemics and infectious diseases

The threats are now so great that many thousands of plant and animal species face extinction.

The section 6 duty is about taking steps to protect nature in our towns, cities, public places and wider landscape, both through practical action on the ground and in the way all public functions are carried out.

The scope for action on the part of the Town Council is very limited especially as no land is owned or managed. Even where there is no responsibility for land management decisions can still affect biodiversity through for example adopting a more sustainable locally sourced procurement policy or through funding decisions and conditions.

A copy of the Biodiversity Statement approved in October 2019 is appended. Although there has been an election since then and there have been changes to the membership of the Town Council the activities remain largely unchanged. It is therefore difficult to see what further actions / commentary can be added to the plan.

Subject to any views from Members it is recommended that it is minuted that the Biodiversity Statement has been the subject of a three year review but there are no substantive changes.

Phil Davy

Town Clerk

**Biodiversity Statement**

The Town Council recognises the importance of biodiversity. Biodiversity is recognised as underpinning human health and can contribute to physical and mental well being.

The widespread reduction in species across the UK coupled with the impact of climate change threatens a major environmental disaster.

Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 introduces a new duty on public authorities in Wales to maintain and enhance biodiversity and in so doing promote the resilience of ecosystems in the exercise of their functions. The Town Council as a public authority will comply with this duty in relation to the scope of its activities. The Town Council owns no land or buildings and its decisions and actions will only indirectly influence ecosystems.

The Town Council has identified four specific areas where it will take proactive action:

**1** **Financial Assistance**

The Town Council provides grants to local organisations for a variety of purposes. Depending on the nature of the proposal it may be appropriate to ask the applicant to incorporate biodiversity considerations, or impose conditions on the grant. Given that the maximum grant available under the financial assistance scheme is £1000 any conditions should be proportionate.

**2 Floral Decorations**

The Town Council funds the hanging baskets and planters in the Town Centre which enhance the street scene between May and September. The plants are and will continue to be sourced from suppliers in South Wales. The type of plants used will be reviewed to ensure they are pollinator friendly.

The Town Council works closely with the Caerffili in Bloom group which involves various community groups and local businesses. The group undertakes additional planting and enhancement to the town. They will be encouraged to review their contribution to biodiversity.

**3 Sustainable Procurement**

Due to the scope of the Town Council’s activities expenditure on goods and services is very limited. Where it is practical to do so and consistent with achieving value for money the Town Council will use local suppliers (defined as within South Wales), will look to use products made from sustainable resources or that use recycled materials. In addition, the Town Council has made a commitment to plastic free alternatives and supports Plastic Free Caerphilly. The Town Council will adopt arrangements to ensure packaging and end of life equipment is recycled.

**4 Awareness Raising**

The Town Councillors have well established networks with local community groups, schools, and businesses and use social media to impart information. They can raise awareness about the serious challenge of tackling biodiversity, which is as important as climate change, plastic pollution, and carbon neutral, issues which are all inter linked.

If the scope of the Council’s functions changes in the future the biodiversity statement will be reviewed.

Approved by Town Council

Date: 21.10.19

Reviewed 26.9.22

**Agenda Item 8.9**

**Report to Town Council 26th September 2022**

**Employee Code of Conduct**

The application of the Finance and Governance Toolkit Health Check (reported separately on the agenda) identified the absence of an Employee Code of Conduct. As all Members are required to observe the Councillor Code of Conduct it would seem equitable that employees should observe a similar code. However with only 2 part time staff it is considered a simplified document will suffice. It will be possible that if a dispute arises in the future on a matter not covered by the document reference can be made to national guidance for local government and / or the Code of Conduct for staff in Caerphilly County Borough Council. Recommendation

To meet the requirement of the Health Check action plan (ref B12) the appended Employee Code of Conduct is adopted.

Phil Davy

Town Clerk

**Caerphilly Town Council**

**Employee Code of Conduct**

This Code of Conduct is applicable to employees of Caerphilly Town Council. There is a separate Code of Conduct for councillors.

**Introduction**

1.1 This Code of Conduct sets out the standards that are expected of Caerphilly Town Council employees; it is complemented by legislation and Town Council policies including Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

1.2 Employees are expected to give the highest possible standard of service to the public, and where it is part of their duties, to provide appropriate advice to councillors.

1.3 Employees must perform their duties with honesty, integrity, impartiality and act in accordance with the trust that the public is entitled to place in them.

1.4 The Town Clerk is accountable to the Town Council for his actions. The Administrative Assistant is accountable to the Town Clerk.

**Disclosure of Information**

2.1 The Town Council operates in an open and transparent manner.

2.2 The law requires that certain types of information must be available to councillors, auditors, government departments, service users and the public. Disclosure of information will be compliant with data protection legislation.

2.3 Employees should not use any information obtained in the course of their employment for personal gain or benefit, nor should they pass it on to others who might use it in such a way.

2.4 Employees will not knowingly disclose information given to them in confidence by anyone, or information which they believe to be of a confidential nature, without the consent of a person authorised to give it, unless required by the law.

**Political Neutrality**

3.1 Employees serve the council as a whole and must ensure the individual rights of all councillors are respected.

3.2 Advice to councillors, either individually or groups, must be given is such a way that the political neutrality of the employee giving the advice is not compromised.

3.3 Employees must not allow their own personal or political opinions to interfere with their work.

**Relationships**

4.1 Employees must treat others with respect and not discriminate unlawfully against any person.

4.2 Mutual respect between employees and councillors is essential. Close personal familiarity between employees with individual councillors can damage other working relationships and prove embarrassing and should therefore be avoided.

4.3 All relationships of a business or private nature with external contractors, or potential contractors, should be made known. Orders and contracts must be awarded on merit, by fair competition against other tenders, and no special favour should be shown to businesses run by, for example, friends, partners, or relatives during the tender process.

**Behaviour**

5.1 Everyone should be treated with dignity and respect. Rudeness or abuse of any description from or towards employees will not be tolerated.

5.2 Employees should be particularly conscious of the impact of information posted on the internet even when such use is in a personal capacity.

5.3 Involvement in activities, which could be construed as inappropriate to the position of a person working in the public sector could lead to disciplinary proceedings.

**Appointment and other employment matters**

6.1 Employees involved in appointments should ensure these are made on the basis of merit. Employees should not be involved in an appointment where they are related to an applicant or have a close personal relationship outside of the workplace.

6.2 Employees should not be involved in decisions relating to discipline, promotion, pay adjustments for any employee who is a relative or partner.

**Outside Commitments**

7.1 The Town Council’s current employees are part time and they may wish to pursue other employments or interests. Employees should avoid other activities which may conflict with either the role or the standards required by the Town Council.

**Personal Interests**

8.1 Employees should declare any financial or non financial interests which could conflict with the authority’s interests.

8.2 Acceptance of any gift and / or hospitality must be approved by the Town Clerk or if the recipient is to be the Town Clerk the approval of the Town Council and recorded.

8.3 Employees should declare membership of any organisation not open to the public without formal membership and commitment of allegiance, and which has secrecy about rules, membership, or conduct.

**Corruption**

9.1 It is a serious criminal offence for employees in their official capacity to corruptly receive or give any gift, loan, fee, reward or advantage for doing, or not doing anything or showing favour or disfavour to any person.

**Resources**

10.1 Employees must ensure any public funds entrusted to or handled by them are dealt with in a responsible and lawful manner. They should strive to ensure value for money to the local community and ensure that matters are conducted in accordance with Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

10.2 All intellectual property created by employees during the course of their employment belongs to the Town Council.

**Alcohol, Drugs and other substance misuse**

11.1 Employees are expected to attend work without being under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or other substances or have their work performance adversely impaired by such substances.

Approved September 2022

**Agenda Item 8.10**

**Report to Town Council 26th September 2022**

**Full Audit 2021-22**

As previously advised this year is the first year the Town Council is receiving a full audit under the Auditor General’s new audit arrangements. The full audit will include;

* Agreement of the accounting statement to the underlying cashbook / ledger
* Verification of the arithmetic accuracy of the underlying records
* Additional planning procedures to identify risk areas. This will include a review of minutes and other documentation including the council’s website
* Review of the council’s annual budget setting and monitoring procedures
* Verification of income including precept and other sources of income to ensure it is completely and accurately accounted for
* Agreement of staff costs to contracts and relevant approvals and verification that the council is properly operating PAYE for wages, salaries, and relevant taxable benefits
* Verification of the year end bank reconciliation to ensure the accounts are complete and accurate
* Verification of the year end loan balances and approvals for any new borrowing
* Verification of member allowances payments to the Independent Remuneration Panel report
* Review of grant payments made under s137 of the Local Government Act 1972
* Verification of other payments to original invoices and checking that payments made complied with the council’s procedures and standing orders
* Verification of year end debtor and creditor balances if appropriate (councils >£200,000)
* Agreement of fixed assets and investments to asset and investment registers

These audit procedures are in addition to those normally undertaken. Documents requested by Audit Wales in order to undertake the full audit were taken to their offices in Cardiff on 23rd August 2022. It is understood that the full audit will take place during September and October 2022 and thereafter the council will be advised of the findings and any recommendations.

The report is for information.

Phil Davy

Town Clerk

**Agenda Item 9**

**Report to Town Council 26th September 2022**

**Planning Matters**

The following planning applications have been received:

**22/0650/FULL** Pontygwindy Allotment, Pontygwindy Road East UI Caerphilly

Erect horticultural education and wellbeing centre

**22/0681/FULL** McDonalds Restaurants Ltd, Unit C, Crossways Park, Parc Pontypandy, Caerphilly CF83 3NL

Carry out minor elevations to include the construction of a 2 sq m extension bumped out under eaves, the relocation of the entrance with new sliding door and replacement glazing. New folded roof to be installed inclusive of aluminium cladding and timber effect louvres. Reconfiguration of the back of house with existing corral extended and a new bin store formed and associated works to the site

**22/0676/COU** 63 Cardiff Road, Caerphilly CF83 1FP

Change the use from A1 to A3

**22/0724/RET** 25Lon Y Garwa, Watford, Caerphilly CF83 1NL

Retain new garden level following substantial earthworks by statutory undertakers on adjacent collapsed sewer line

**22/0715/LBC** Travellers Rest Inn, Mountain Road, Thornhill, Caerphilly CF83 1LY

Carry out internal structural works to replace timber beams to first floor

**22/0723/FULL** 5 Lon Y Garwa, Watford, Caerphilly, CF83 1NL

Erect two storey side extension

**22/0755/FULL** 48 Lewis Drive, Caerphilly Cf83 3FX

Erect two storey rear extension

**22/0757/FULL** Land at Virginia Park Golf Course, Virginia Park, Caerphilly

Construct an electricity sub station

Agenda Item 10.1

Report to Town Council 26th September 2022

List of Payments

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **CHEQUE NO.** | **PAYEE** | **IN RESPECT OF** | **AMOUNT £** |
| Internet | EE Ltd | Mobile phone | 22.98 |
| Internet | CCBC | Sponsorship Food Fair | 2250.00 |
| Direct Debit | Sage Global Services Ltd | Payroll Software | 8.40 |
| Internet | BT (Broadband) | Broadband Service | 24.91 |
| Internet | HMRC | Income Tax & WI | 577.31 |
| Internet | Admin Assistant | Salary June | 390.03 |
| Internet | Town Clerk | Salary June | 753.38 |
| Direct Debit | NEST | Pension June | 28.44 |
| 304157 | 2nd Caerphilly Brownies | Grant | 250.00 |
| 304158 | Aber Valley Wolves | Grant | 400.00 |
| 304159 | Caerphilly Miners Centre | Grant | 400.00 |
| 304160 | Gwent Police | Sponsorship Fun Day | 400.00 |
| Internet | Twyn Community Centre | Rent & Room Hire | 1032.00 |
| Direct Debit | Currys Business | Laptop & Software | 611.08 |
| Direct Debit | Zoom Video Communications | Subscription Renewal | 143.88 |
| Internet | Noticeboard Co Cumbria Ltd | New Noticeboard | 3060.00 |
| Internet | EE Ltd | Mobile phone | 22.98 |
| 304161 | Paula Reed | Mandatory allowance | 150.00 |
| 304162 | John Pettit | Mandatory allowance | 150.00 |
| 304163 | Anne Broughton Pettit | Mandatory allowance | 150.00 |
| 304164 | Cath Lewis | Mandatory allowance | 150.00 |
| 304165 | James Fussell | Mandatory allowance | 150.00 |
| 204166 | Colin Elsbury | Mandatory allowance | 150.00 |
| 204167 | Mike R | Mandatory allowance | 150.00 |
| Direct Debit | Sage Global Services Ltd | Payroll software | 8.40 |
| Internet | BT (Broadband) | Broadband Service | 24.91 |
| 304168 | Mike Prew | Mayor’s allowance (no 2) | 225.00 |
| Internet | CCBC | Flyers Flower Festival | 260.00 |
| Internet | HMRC | Income Tax & NI | 577.31 |
| Internet | Admin Assistant | Salary July | 390.03 |
| Internet | Town Clerk | Salary July | 753.38 |
| Direct Debit | NEST | Pension July | 28.44 |
| Internet | Account Transfer | Restricted reserves (CIL) | 1371.35 |
| Debit Card | Microsoft 365 | Software licence renewal | 59.99 |
| Internet | EE Ltd | Mobile phone | 22.98 |
| Internet | Digital Systems UK | Printing | 38.87 |
| Direct Debit | Sage Global Services Ltd | Payroll software | 8.40 |
| Internet | BT (Broadband) | Broadband service | 24.91 |
| Direct Debit | NEST | Pension August | 28.44 |
| Internet | HMRC | Income Tax & NI | 576.91 |
| Internet | Admin Assistant | Salary August | 390.03 |
| Internet | Town Clerk | Salary August | 753.78 |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Internet | CCBC | Election Fee | 9932.67 |
| Debit Card | Royal Mail | Stamps | 95.00 |
| Internet Payment | Megaday | Event Sponsorship | 4000.00 |

It is recommended that Members note and approve the payments.

**Agenda Item 10.2**

**Report to Town Council 26th September 2022**

**Bank Account Balances**

Bank Account Balances at 1st September 2022

£

Community Direct Plus Account (current account) 142,085.47

Corporate Instant Deposit (operational reserves) 10,641.62

Corporate Instant Deposit (restricted reserves) 18,226.88

Members to note the information

**Agenda Item 10.3**

**Report to Town Council 26th September 2022**

**Applications for Financial Assistance**

**£**

Budget 6000

Commitment 1450

Available 4550

1 1223(Caerphilly) Air Training Corps

The local ATC has applied for a grant to assist with funding a new flight simulator. The total cost is £885 and a grant of £485 has been requested from the Town Council. Based on the number of members resident within the Town Council area a grant of £250 could be made in accordance with the policy on financial assistance. The ATC has regularly provided voluntary support at the fireworks display and the Town Council has paid the organisation £300 each year for the loan of their marquee which has been used as the command post. With the cancellation of the fireworks for the last two years and the likelihood of further cancellation in 2022 the ATC has not had the benefit of the income they normally get from the Town Council. Members may therefore wish to consider increasing the grant to the maximum available under the policy of £400. The financial assistance expenditure would be authorised under the Local Government Act 1972, section 137.

**Financial Assistance – Application Form**

**Name of Organisation**

1223(Caerphilly) Air Training Corps, Morgan Jones Park, Caerphilly

**Purpose or Activities of Organisation**

To provide aviation related training relevant for both services and civilian life. See more information at: <https://www.aircadets.org> or <https://1223squadron.org.uk>

**Membership of Organisation / or Beneficiaries of Activities**

Number of members resident in the Town Council area 25-30

**Membership Fees**

£10 per month (but often waived in case of deprivation)

**Present Financial Position**

Current account balance is £3400, however £200 is currently held pending cheque clearance, and £1000 is due to be expended in the remainder of financial year to pay subscriptions to our national HQ.

**Purpose for which assistance is required and estimate of costs**

1223(Caerphilly) Squadron was closed due to Covid -19 for the vast majority of 2020 and 2021. In this time much of our IT equipment was left and has degraded over time. With the squadron now fully up and running and our cadet numbers growing the squadron is seeking to improve its facilities. It has already spent nearly £2000 on new IT equipment. The final

element of which is a new flight simulator.

In line with the RAF Astra campaign the RAF is placing a much higher emphasis on computer based training, and the cadets are seeking to also integrate this into our training. However due to the cancellation of the Big Cheese and the Caerphilly Fireworks display in 2022 our income from fundraising this year is a lot less than normal.

The squadron is seeking a contribution towards our new flight simulator as detailed below. The squadron can meet some of the costs of this project from iits funds but will struggle to met the full costs.

**Item Cost £**

Xbox5 450

Screen 200

Flight controls 160

Software 50

Headset 25

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Total 885

Squadron contribution 400

Request Town Council contribution 485

**Agenda Item 11**

**Report to Town Council 26th September 2022**

**Correspondence**

**11.1 Sport Caerphilly Sport Awards – Table Sponsor**

An email has been received from CCBC inviting sponsorship at the Sports Award.

“An opportunity has arisen where we are looking for companies/etc to sponsor tables at our Sport Caerphilly Sport Awards evening which is being held at Bryn Meadows in November.

Would the Town Council be interested in having a table sponsored after them.

There would be a cost of £50 to it but within this

* Feature in event programme and evening presentation
* Table named after your company/ Town Council
* Table allocated for business promotional material
* Promotion via social media in lead up to event

Look forward to hearing from you.

Sean Davies

Sport Development Officer, CCBC”

Members need to decide whether they wish to sponsor the event. The cost would be charged to the Sponsored Events budget.