

Ogmore Valley Community Council Cyngor Cymuned Cwm Ogwr



FINANCE AND GENERAL COMMITTEE MEETING CYFARFOD PWYLLGOR CYLLID A CYFFREDINOL

Tuesday 19 March 2024, 6.30 pm via Teams
Dydd Mawrth 19 Mawrth 2023, 6.30 pm ar Teams

MINUTES

In Attendance

Cllr David Newman
Cllr Margaret Lloyd
Cllr David Pound
Cllr Hywel Williams (from item 16)

Scott Allin – RFO
Niamh Gwilym - Clerk

13 Apologies for Absence

Cllr Craig Batchelor-Howells
Cllr Angela Jones

Resolved: Members unanimously accepted the apologies for absence.

14 Declarations of Personal/Prejudicial Interests in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct & Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992

No interests were declared.

15 Minutes 15 November 2023 – Annex A

No items were raised as the minutes had been previously approved by Full Council.

16 Matters Arising

- Christmas Lights – Annex B

It was resolved in the last Full Council meeting that the Finance and General Committee should create a financial plan that could be considered alongside the complaints for and against Christmas Lights.

The need to actively consider the budget was highlighted, as the Council are at budget capacity in terms of Christmas lights, unless the Council used reserves to fund the additional lighting. It was noted that the Council are exploring additional CAT expenditure so the awareness of affordability is paramount, noting that last year, the Council spent just over £12,000 on the Christmas trees and major decorations and £9,600 on garlands.

It was suggested that the Council could host focal points for Christmas displays in each ward to concentrate the lighting in order to emphasise the effects of the lighting in identified areas throughout the Valley and maximise the value for money.

Cllr Lloyd proposed a public meeting to discuss the Christmas lights with the public.

The proposal was seconded however it was noted that the Council would have to lead on a meeting with a specific proposal. A discussion ensued regarding the advantages and disadvantages of a public meeting. It was recognised that a public meeting may not result in the most effective outcome.

Therefore, it was suggested that Councillors individually canvass in their local areas to gain holistic views of the public's preference of the geographical location of the Christmas lights and to encourage cooperation with the contractors to represent the community's views. Therefore, it was noted that the Ogmores Vale Community Councillors have been invited to BCBC Cllr Hughes' public surgeries and it was suggested that the Council could advertise their presence at such surgeries to discuss Christmas lights with the community. It was noted that this would have to be discussed with Cllr Hughes.

It was agreed that the Council should advertise that there is an opportunity to discuss Christmas Lights through either contacting the Councillors individually or at Cllr Hughes' surgery, emphasising that Cllr Hughes has no responsibility for the Christmas lights.

Resolved: to recommend to the Full Council to advertise opportunities to discuss Christmas lights with Councillors, either directly or at the Ogmores Vale Surgery.

- Active for Life Funding – Annex C

It was resolved during the last Full Council meeting that the Finance and General Committee should consider the increase in costs of the Halo Annual Playscheme. The costs have increased from £4,500 to £6,471.15. It was noted that this is a 43% increase and that the proposed scheme will not provide a service in Evanstown. The Council currently have a budget for £4,500 to support the playscheme. Whilst the importance of the playscheme was noted, it was suggested that the Clerk ask Halo to provide a further breakdown of when the 11 weeks are, what provisions will be in place in Evanstown and further justification and breakdown of the costs.

Resolved: to recommend to the Full Council that the Council should enquire when the 11 weeks are, what services can be provided for Evanstown and for a further justification of the increase in costs.

17 Investment Strategy – Annex D

It was noted that the Council may want to consider adopting an investment strategy and the RFO and Clerk are interested in gaining direction from the Council regarding the best use of funds, highlighting that the Council should seek to protect its' funds through government guarantees (FSCS).

It was noted that an option used by many Community Councils is COIF, but COIF is not protected by the FSCS and many banks do not take applications from organisations, only individuals, so the Council's scope is limited. It was agreed that at the moment, £100,000 should be transferred between the 1.62% interest accounts (instant access) to maximise financial benefit from the accounts available as there is safety with the bank the Council currently use. However, it was noted that it is still safer to split the funds over two banks to maximise security. Therefore, it was decided that the RFO and Clerk should research alternative building societies that are FSCS protected and present the information to the Council.

Resolved: to recommend to the Full Council that £100,000 of the funds should be moved into the current interest account and to research alternative building societies to maximise financial security.

18 Recommendations to Full Council

The resolutions above to be ratified by the Full Council.

The meeting closed at 7.30pm

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Signature of the Chairperson, Cllr David Newman Date

Niamh Gwilym – Clerk of the Council
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