



BLAENAVON TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL FINANCE MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 10th of JULY 2024 AT 6.30 PM.

Pursuant to the requirements of Section 47 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, the meeting was held on a hybrid basis in the Council Chamber at 101, High Street Blaenavon and remotely.

In attendance:

Councillors in attendance: M. Wheeler, (In the Chair), L. Cowles, A. Beavan, N. Matthews, S. Templeton, J. Hunt, L. Evans, S. Keen, A. Jones, I. Parfitt, T. Porter.

Officers: Kevin Warren (Chief Officer), Kerry Jones (Assistant Chief Officer), Sophie Johnson (Community Wellbeing Development Officer).

Visitors: Andrea Jones (Wellbeing Therapist).

Member of public: None present

The finance meeting was opened at 6:30pm by the Deputy Mayor Councillor Wheeler who welcomed everyone and expressed thanks for attendance.

1. To receive any questions from the public.

None received.

2. To receive and accept apologies.

None received.

3. Declarations of Interest.

- Cllr Hunt – Personal – Items 7 and 11
- Cllr Parfitt – Personal – Item 11

4. To receive a presentation from Andrea Jones children and young people's wellbeing therapist.

Andrea provided an overview of her role and services as a therapist for young people aged five to eighteen, a position she has held for ten years. During this time, she has supported young people, their families, and carers through various group and individual sessions. Most

recently, she facilitated a 'chill and chat' group with Susie Sorby from Bronafon Housing, addressing topics such as peer pressure, anger management, behaviour, self-esteem, boundary setting, healthy relationships, and self-harm.

Andrea's experience includes working in schools, the health service, and with organisations such as Barnardo's and Action for Children. Recently, she ran a weekly project at a GP practice in Rhondda Cynon Taff, aimed at meeting the mental health needs of young people whose referrals to CAHMS were often rejected. This project supported a total of 136 children who otherwise would not have received support.

Members enquired about the continuation of Andrea's work with Bronafon. Andrea confirmed she had conducted three successful sessions, but funding was due to end. Members also asked if she planned to provide sessions in Blaenavon and where these could be held.

Andrea mentioned discussions had taken place with Ashleigh Taylor about potentially holding sessions at The Hwb, though no progress had been made.

Members invited Andrea to return to a future meeting with a proposal to enable a decision on whether to support her work. Members suggested she consult with the Sophie Johnson and Susie Sorby.

Resolved: Members noted the update.

5. Council Meetings: To confirm the minutes of the Council Finance Meeting held on the 12th of June 2024.

Minutes were read for accuracy with one amendment.

Cllr Porter was present at the meeting; his attendance will be added to the minutes.

It was proposed by Cllr Cowles and seconded by Cllr Templeton that the minutes be accepted with the above amendment.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Minutes approved as a true and accurate record.

6. Responsible Finance Officer's Update: To receive and consider the June 2024 financial updates.

Mr Warren (RFO) forwarded to members the June 2024 financial reports electronically in advance of the meeting which detailed the following areas:

- Income and Expenditure
- Credit Card Payments
- Cheque Payments
- Bacs Payments
- Cash Book Transactions
- Bank Reconciliation
- Project Expenditure
- Budget
- VAT

- Bank Statements

Mr Warren presented to members each of the above areas of finance for June 2024 and highlighted any relevant information.

Mr Warren informed members that there had been an income of £5,360.00 which was made up of £5k from TCBC Levelling Up Fund and £360 for office room hire relating to Celt+

Mr Warren informed members that the Cllr allowances had been successfully transacted and that the next precept payment was due at the end of August 2024.

Members were invited to ask any questions in relation to the information presented. There were none.

The final training session with Edge IT has been arranged enabling the September 2024 finance report to be produced using the new system.

Members were happy with the presentation.

It was proposed by Cllr Jones and seconded by Cllr Cowles that the financial report for June 2024 be accepted.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Financial update for June 2024 accepted by members.

7. To receive, discuss and make a determination regarding the proposed outdoor cinema project at Blaenavon Ironworks in partnership with Wonder Cinema and Cadw.

The quotations from Cadw and Wonder Cinema for a two-night event was sent to all members prior to the meeting.

Members engaged in a detailed discussion which included ticket sales and availability for residents, proof of address, wet weather plan, disabled provisions, site plan and if families were restricted to the number of nights they could attend.

Tickets will be booked online via Wonder Cinema. There will be 150 free tickets provided by Blaenavon Town Council for residents plus 150 tickets for general sale by Wonder Cinema each night.

It was proposed by Cllr Cowles and seconded by Cllr Keen to support the project.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Project approved.

8. To receive, discuss and make any relevant determinations relating to Festive Lighting Xmas Light Motifs 2024.

Details of Festive Christmas lights were sent to all members prior to the meeting for their perusal.

Members discussed designs and colours for the Christmas lights displays.

It was proposed by Cllr Templeton to have red and green Christmas tree design lights which could be alternated when displayed. This was seconded by Cllr Jones.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Christmas lights selection approved.

9. To discuss and make any relevant determinations relating to grant funding opportunities 2024/25.

A discussion took place amongst members and officers with regards to the availability of grant funding.

To enable the Town Council to continue with the range of projects provided for the community and to enable the Council to grow, it was agreed applications to secure funding must be made.

It is believed that the National Lottery are the main funders to offer grants to Town Councils and many of the Town Council projects match their criteria for funding.

It was suggested that Sophie Johnson (Community Wellbeing Officer) look into grant funding opportunities and availability.

Sophie explained that it takes a lot of time to complete application forms, and that working part time had found it difficult to make applications due to her over stretched role. Sophie expressed that any help from members would be gratefully received.

It was proposed by Cllr Hunt that a working group be established to look at potential grant funding opportunities. This was seconded by Cllr Matthews.

All members in agreement.

A further discussion took place between members regarding the working group. Cllrs Matthews, Hunt, and Beavan agreed to be part of the working group.

This was proposed by Cllr Beavan and seconded by Cllr Jones.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Grant funding working group established with the following Cllrs appointed, namely Cllrs Matthews, Hunt, and Beavan. Newly appointed Cllr Angela Lewis is to be asked to join the working group.

10. To discuss and make any relevant determinations relating to Town Council World Heritage partnerships 2024/25.

A discussion took place amongst members regarding the lack of feedback and communication from the World Heritage partnerships and that Chatham House Rules had been applied to the previous meeting, thus not allowing the appointed Cllr to give feedback to members.

There has been a limited amount of involvement by the Council partly due to incorrect emails for the Chief Officer and one of the appointed Cllrs. It was felt that the Council could conduct a stronger, more positive contribution to the working groups of which three councillors have been appointed to.

The Chief Officer, as requested by members contacted Rebecca Hartley and invited her to attend either the finance or full council meeting in June, regrettably Rebecca was unable to make either of the meetings.

A further invite was sent for a meeting with Cllrs Matthews and Cowles. Rebecca is currently on a leave of absence from work, and it is unknown who is covering her position.

Cllr Evans proposed that the Chief Officer write to Jo Gauden TCBC to raise the above issues and to enquire as to who is covering Rebecca's post during her leave. This was seconded by Cllr Matthews.

All members on agreement.

Resolved: Chief Officer to write to Jo Gauden at TCBC.

11. To discuss and make any relevant determinations regarding the proposed Community Concert at Blaenavon Workmen's Hall in partnership with Shining Stars Music Academy.

The Chief Officer informed members that Sophie Johnson had requested a booking form from the Workmen's Hall on the 13th of June 2024. The booking form was received on the 19th of June. This was completed and returned to the Workmen's Hall on the 20th of June 2024.

On the 28th of June 2024 at 10:30 pm (Friday) an email was received from the Board of the Workmen's Hall stating that the booking form would be discussed by the board and an update would follow in due course.

On the 1st of July 2024 (Monday) the Chief Officer responded with an email thanking the board for the update and requested when the next board meeting was scheduled, to date there has been no response from the Workmen's Hall.

As a board member of the Workmen's Hall, Cllr Hunt was asked when the next board meeting was due to take place. Cllr Hunt explained that it was scheduled for the 10th of July although it had been postponed and he had not been informed as to when the meeting would now take place.

The Chief Officer explained that he had received a telephone call from Rebecca Osmond, wanting an update as sound / tech engineers had been provisionally booked for the concert one month ago and that she would need to confirm the booking with them.

A discussion took place amongst members regarding the lengthy delay in correspondence from the Workmen's Hall Board, the possibility of losing another booking for a community event and if ward members could assist with the matter.

It was noted that the matter was now deemed as requiring an urgent response from the Workmen's Hall Board for the planning process to commence.

It was proposed by Cllr Cowles that the Chief Officer send an email following tonight's meeting to the Workmen's Hall Board for an urgent update. This was seconded by Cllr Keen.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Chief Officer to write to the Chair of Blaenavon Workmen's Hall following the meeting.

12. To discuss and make a determination regarding potential Town Council projects for allocation into the Project Action Plan 2024/25. Relevant updates or new projects as notified.

None received.

Meeting ended at 19.45 hrs.

Chairman Signed:



Date: 11/9/24