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

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

**CLERC Y TREF: MAER Y TREF:**

**TOWN CLERK: TOWN MAYOR:**

**P G Davy Cllr M Prew**

11th November 2024

An **Ordinary Meeting** of the **Caerphilly Town Council** will be held on **Monday 18th November**  **2024** 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 16th September 2024. To receive and if thought fit to confirm the Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 21st October 2024.

. .

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

5. **COMMUNITY SAFETY MATTERS**

6. **TOWN MAYOR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

7. **ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS**

**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**

8. **TOWN CLERK’S REPORTS**

Items 8.1 to 8.4 were deferred at the last Town Council meeting on 21st October 2024.

8.1 Q2 Budget Monitoring 2024/25 Financial Year.

8.2 External Audit Report.

8.3 Flag Flying Calendar.

8.4 Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales – Draft Annual Report 2025 to 2026.

8.5 Events Working Group.

8.6 Budget Estimates 2025/26.

8.7 Charter for Community and Town Councils.

8.8 Local Government Pay Agreement 2024/25.

9. **PLANNING MATTERS**

10. **PAYMENTS AND FINANCIAL MATTERS**

10.1 List of payments

10.2 Bank Account Balances

10.3 Applications for Financial Assistance

11. **CORRESPONDENCE**

12. **MEMBERS REQUESTS FOR FUTURE REPORTS**

13. **NOTICE OF MOTION**

The following Notice of Motion has been submitted by Councillor P. J. Bevan

“This Council notes with dismay the decision by the UK Government to end automatic winter fuel payments to all pensioners. The decision will cause millions of pensioners across the UK severe hardship and will contribute to the untimely deaths of thousands.

The Council is particularly concerned for the Welfare of senior citizens in our community and across Wales in the winter months ahead. This Council, therefore calls on the Wales Secretary Jo Stevens, as Wales representative in the UK Cabinet, and Eluned Morgan as First Minister of Wales to urge Keir Starmer and the UK Government to restore the Winter Fuel Payment forthwith to all pensioners”.

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

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

**CLERC Y TREF: MAER Y TREF:**

**TOWN CLERK: TOWN MAYOR:**

**P G Davy Cllr M Prew**

**MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE CAERPHILLY TOWN COUNCIL HELD BY REMOTE ACCESS ON 16TH SEPTEMBER 2024**

**Present:**

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

**Apologies:**

Councillors J Fussell, A Broughton Pettit, P Reed

**In Attendance:**

P G Davy, Town Clerk

**44 MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON 15TH JULY 2024**

Minutes of the Ordinary Town Council meeting held on 15th July 2024 were received and confirmed. As the meeting was held by remote access the minutes will be signed by the Mayor as soon as practical.

**45 MATTERS ARISING**

Minute 35 There had been no response from the PCC in respect of off road bikes and in view of latest reports of problems at Gallager Retail Park it was agreed to write again to the PCC.

There had been no response from CCBC concerning the future of the flagpoles adjacent to the Cenotaph. However Members had made an informal arrangement to have access for flag flying. Councillor J Grenfell agreed to produce a calendar of flag days and a list of new flags that would need to be purchased for the consideration of the Town Council.

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**46 COMMUNITY SAFETY MATTERS**

A written report had been received from Gwent Police. There had been an increase in ASB at Gallager Retail Park and Pontygwindy Road involving off road bikes. Patrols have been increased in these areas and information has been sought from the public to identify the riders / bikes. An individual has been repeatedly begging and harassing customers outside Home Bargains and has been issued with a Community Protection Notice preventing the person from returning.

Members raised the following:

* On Nantgarw Road
* Parking on the pavement adjacent to the Kings Arms, to be referred to CCBC

**47 TOWN MAYOR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor outlined his recent engagements:

* Twinning Event
* Twinning Association Meeting
* Megaday
* Kick boxing fund raising event at Asda
* Mount Carmel 150 years celebration
* Castel to Castel fund raising event for Velindre
* Presentation of prizes at Wales Strongest Man at Caerphilly Rugby Club
* Visit to Church View Home

**48 ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS**

Concern was again raised about the state of the Virginia Park development and the amount of rubbish that had collected. Other locations where litter was a problem was the pedestrian footpath between Bronrhiw Avenue and Mountain Road and around the Castle View lake. There was ongoing pollution issue on the Nant Aber which was being dealt with by Welsh Water / CCBC.

**49 TOWN CLERK’S REPORTS**

1 Combined CIL / Events Working Group

It was noted that the planning for the Christmas Lights switch on was underway. The ESAG notification form and application for road closure of the Twyn had been submitted to CCBC. The 5 local primary schools had been contacted to confirm whether their choirs would be participating in this year’s event. It was noted that the ice skating rink at Owain Glyndwr playing fields would open on the same evening as the Christmas Lights switch on.

It was resolved:

1 To approach CCBC about delaying the opening of the ice skating rink until Saturday

16th November, or alternatively to provide additional stewards in the town centre for the

Friday evening and to contribute to any additional traffic management requested by ESAG.

2 To accept the recommendation from the Working Group that the annual CIL receipts

should continue to accrue in the restricted reserves pending new project proposals.

3 Having regard to a gap of 5 years it was agreed in principle that the fireworks display at

Caerphilly Castle should be reinstated in due course subject to agreement with Cadw. It

was further agreed that the resource implications for planning and managing a large

scale event would have to be reviewed and reflected in future budget planning, and that

this would be referred to the Events Working Group.

**50 PLANNING MATTERS**

A list of all the planning applications received since the last Town Council in July 2024 was included on the agenda as confirmation of consultation by the Local Planning Authority. The applications are circulated as soon as received from CCBC on an individual basis and it is for Members to identify any matters they wish to raise before the expiry of the 21 day consultation period. No comments have been made on any of the applications listed.

**51 PAYMENTS AND FINANCIAL MATTERS**

1 List of payments were noted and approved.

2 Bank account balances were noted.

**52 CORRESPONDENCE**

A request had been received to put a memorial plaque on a bench in Crescent Road originally provided by the Town Council. It was agreed to support the request subject to the applicant meeting all costs with the plaque and its installation on the bench.

**53 MEMBER REQUESTS FOR FUTURE REPORTS**

There was a request to invite the Cowsheds to present their consultation findings to a future meeting of the Town Council.

The meeting closed at 7.25 pm

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

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

**CLERC Y TREF: MAER Y TREF:**

**TOWN CLERK: TOWN MAYOR:**

**P G Davy Cllr M Prew**

**MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE CAERPHILLY TOWN COUNCIL HELD BY MULTI LOCATION ON 21ST OCTOBER 2024**

**Present:**

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

**Apologies:**

Councillors C Elsbury, C Lewis

**In Attendance:**

R Richards, Cowshed

P Seaver, Stride Treglown

R Taylor, Gwent Police

P G Davy, Town Clerk

Prior to the formal business there was a presentation on the Caerphilly Town 2035 Plan. At heart of the placemaking approach to regeneration was communication and engagement with a wide range of stakeholders. There were three themes of live, work, visit. A fly through video showed the key projects and there was discussion on the transport interchange, Pentrebane Street, the cultural centre, and active travel proposals for Van Road.

Due to IT issues the formal agenda was curtailed to the following items:

Agenda item 5 Community Safety Matters

Agenda Item 8.5 Minor Authority Governor – Ysgol Gymraeg Caerffili

Agenda Item 10.3 Application for Financial Assistance

Agenda Item 11.1 Request for Bench Memorial

All other items were deferred to the Town Council on 18 November 2024

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**54 COMMUNITY SAFETY MATTERS**

A written report had been received which recorded 151 reported incidents in St Martins ward during September 2024, covering ASB, shoplifting, homelessness and the bus stop area opposite Iceland.

The issue of pavement parking was raised and physical barriers were suggested as a means to control the problem and keep the pavements clear for pedestrians.

**55 TOWN CLERK’S REPORTS**

1 Minor Authority Governor – Ysgol Gymraeg Caerffili

It was agreed to reappoint Councillor P J Bevan as the Minor Authority Governor at Ysgol Gymraeg Caerffili.

Councillor P J Bevan and J Fussell declared an interest and took no part in the decision on this matter.

**56 PAYMENTS AND FINANCIAL MATTERS**

Applications for Financial Assistance

Eisteddfod y Cymoedd

It was agreed to provide a grant of £500. The financial assistance expenditure is authorised under the Local Government Act 1972 section 145.

**57 CORRESPONDENCE**

A request had been received to put a memorial plaque on a bench originally provided by the Town Council on the Castle Footpath closest to Piccadilly. It was agreed to support the request subject to the applicant meeting all costs with the plaque and its installation on the bench.

The meeting closed at 7.45 pm

**Agenda Item 8.1**

**Report to Town Council 18 November 2024**

**Q2 Budget Monitoring 2024/25 Financial Year**

Comparison of actual expenditure to annual estimates for the period 1st April 2024 to 30th September 2024

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Main Budget Heads** | **Q2 Actual £** | **Annual Estimate £** |
| Mayor’s Allowance | 450.00 | 900.00 |
| Members Allowances | 2288.00 | 2500.00 |
| Training | 0.00 | 1000.00 |
| Staff Costs | 11911.44 | 23990.00 |
| Travelling Expenses | 00.00 | 100.00 |
| Audit Fees | 1700.00 | 600.00 |
| Insurance | 1231.27 | 1500.00 |
| Office Costs | 3347.39 | 11550.00 |
| Sponsored Events | 11680.25 | 19800.00 |
| Floodlighting St Martins Church | 0 | 400.00 |
| Fireworks Display | 0 | 20000.00 |
| Fireworks Charity Donation | 0 | 4000.00 |
| Floral Displays | 0 | 17000.00 |
| Christmas Lights | 529.29 | 10000.00 |
| Lantern Parade | 0 | 11000.00 |
| Financial Assistance | 3200.00 | 6000.00 |
| Sports Scheme | 0 | 9000.00 |
| Newsletter | 788.00 | 900.00 |
| Elections | 0 | 0 |
| Miscellaneous | 418.37 | 500.00 |
| VAT | 469.76 | Included above |
| CIL Projects | 0 | 0 |
| **TOTAL** | 38,013.77 | 140,740.00 |

£

Budget 140,740.00

Actual expenditure to 30.09.24 38,013.77

(27% of original estimate)

In addition, £46226.76 has been transferred to reserves from the current account

Members to note the report

**Agenda Item 8.2**

**Report to Town Council 18 November 2024**

**External Audit Report 2023-24**

The external audit of the Annual Return for the year ending 31 March 2024 has been completed by Audit Wales. The Auditor General for Wales has issued an unqualified audit opinion.

“On the basis of my audit, in my opinion no matters have come to my attention to give cause for concern that, in any material respect, the information reported in this Annual Return:

* Has not been prepared in accordance with proper practices
* That relevant legislative and regulatory requirements have not been met
* Is not consistent with the Council’s governance arrangements; and
* That the Council does not have proper arrangements in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.”

There were no other matters drawn to the Council’s attention.

A copy of the Certified Annual Return together with the full text of the Auditor General’s report and opinion is separately circulated with the agenda papers.

The Notice of Conclusion of Audit and Right to Inspect has been published on the website and noticeboard together with a copy of the Certified Annual Return and Audit Opinion.

It is recommended that the Town Council approves and accepts the Certified Annual Return.

Phil Davy

Town Clerk

**Agenda Item 8.3**

**Report to Town Council 18 November 2024**

**Flag Flying Calendar**

At the September 2024 meeting of the Town Council it was agreed to consider a calendar of flag flying days and to consider the establishment of a budget to purchase flags where required.

The following suggestions have been made:

All Year Round Cymru flag x 4 (already acquired)

1st March St David’s Day

June Pride Flags

16th September Owain Glyndwr (already acquired)

November Remembrance Sunday

December Llewellyn Day

There is no established budget for the purchase of flags. However if Members wish to support the proposal for flag flying days and the purchase of new flags where required, it is recommended that £1000 is vired from savings in the 2024-25 budget to Miscellaneous to enable new flags to be purchased.

Phil Davy

Town Clerk

**Agenda Item 8.4**

**Report to Town Council 18 November 2024**

**Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales – Draft Annual Report 2025 to 2026**

The IRPW has published draft proposals for 2025 -26. The Panel continues to mandate payments to community and town councils for the extra costs of working from home. There is no change to the Determination made last year.

Determination 7

All community and town councils must pay their members £156 a year (equivalent to £3 a week) towards the extra household expenses (including heating, lighting, power and broadband) of working from home.

Councils must either pay their members £52 a year for the cost of office consumables required to carry out their role, or alternatively councils must enable members to claim full reimbursement for the cost of their office consumables.

The Town Council has opted to pay £52 consolidated in one payment with the £156.

Cost of care or personal assistance remains mandatory, but no claims have been made and currently is not budgeted. Payments to Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Attendance Allowance, Financial Loss, Travel and Subsistence are all optional.

Following an independent review the Panel’s functions will transfer to the Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru on 1 April 2025. This is as a result of the Elections and Elected Bodies (Wales) Act being passed in July 2024.

The report is for information.

Phil Davy

Town Clerk

**Agenda Item 8.5**

**Report to Town Council 18 November 2024**

**Events Working Group**

The notes of the Events Working Group are appended.

**Christmas Lights Switch On 15 November 2024**

The Christmas Lights Switch On took place on 15 November 2024 and therefore the Town Council is invited to note matters that were discussed in relation to the event that has now taken place. There were issues discussed around the future of the event in 2025 and beyond, including increasingly onerous traffic and pedestrian management, and the pressure on the space available to safely manage the event at the Twyn given the numbers attending the event. The Town Council is under resourced for organising large scale events.

**Fireworks Display**

At the Town Council meeting on 16 September 2024 the principle of reinstating the fireworks display at Caerphilly Castle was agreed with the timing being dependent on agreement with Cadw. The resource implications for planning and managing a large scale event were referred to the Working Group for review of options and budget implications. The Town Clerk highlighted the pros and cons of each of the options set out in the discussion paper. Fundamentally all the options require an increase in resources. The Working Group were concerned that an increase in resources would have an implication for the precept and felt unable to make any recommendation to the Town Council.

The budget estimates for 2025 /26 are the subject of a separate agenda item and the precept for the new financial year has to be agreed at this meeting. A decision is therefore required as to how the Town Council wishes to proceed with regard to the capacity to continue as an event organiser.

In order to reach a determination, the following, either, or proposition is offered to enable the estimates to be confirmed:

Either

1 To agree to the development of the resource capacity and to fund this by an increase of £3.50 in the precept to £19.00 for a Band D property for 2025/26.

Or

2 Given that there is no certainty that it will be possible to reinstate the fireworks display in 2025 to defer any decision about resource capacity to a future date and to hold the precept at £15.50 for 2025/26. By default, this in effect becomes a decision there will be no fireworks in 2025 notwithstanding the position with Cadw. Although the status quo budget does include an allocation for the fireworks as per the past five years this has enabled savings to be achieved within the budget, and reserves increased to absorb increasing costs of running events and general inflation across all supplies and services.

Phil Davy

Town Clerk

**Notes of Events Working Group held on 14 October 2024 by remote access**

**Present:**

Councillors P J Bevan, J Fussell, S Kent, A Broughton Pettit, J Pettit, M Prew

**In Attendance:**

P G Davy, Town Clerk

In the absence of the Chair of the Working Group, the meeting was chaired by Councillor J Fussell.

**Christmas Lights Switch On 15 November 2024**

1 The following arrangements had been made:

* Twyn Community Centre booked
* CCBC Event Notification Form submitted
* St John Ambulance First Aid cover booked
* PA / Performers Shelter booked
* Crowd barriers order placed, but see note 2 re ESAG
* Selection packs and sweets purchased
* Indemnity for festive lighting and schedule of street lighting columns submitted to CCBC

2 Meeting with ESAG

The Town Clerk and Councillor S Kent met with ESAG on 30.9.24. The follow measures are required:

* Road closure of Twyn 17.00 to 20.30
* Prohibition of parking Twyn car park 17.00 to 20.30
* Road closure of Cardiff Road 18.30 to 20.00
* Extra crowd barriers to extend north and south along pavement from Twyn junction to existing pedestrian crossings (order will need to be amended to increase number of barriers)

It was put to CCBC that wider traffic and pedestrian management measures beyond the Twyn are due to the larger numbers of people in the town centre due to multiple events supported by CCBC, and therefore it might be better for CCBC to directly manage measures beyond the Twyn (Cardiff Road and diversion). This was rejected and that responsibility (and liabilities) should be with Town Council as event organiser. However Paul Hudson has offered some practical help with liaising with the Traffic Management Company, a contribution to the increase in costs associated with traffic management, and stewards in the town centre, extra to those needed to manage the Christmas Lights switch on.

3 Stewards

There is a minimum requirement for 8 (preferably 10) to safely manage the event. In 2023 there was insufficient stewards. CCBC has circulated their list of stewards, but none have been forthcoming. There has also been an item on the website under vacancies inviting volunteer stewards but again there has been no response.

The event will therefore be dependent on Town Councillors committing to turn out on 15 November to act as stewards.

4 Elsbury Access Platforms

2024 will be the second year of a three year contract with Elsbury Access Platforms to supply the Christmas Tree and install the Christmas Lights. Cost uplift for 2024 will be agreed on basis of September 2024 CPI which will be published on 16.10.24. Date for Christmas Tree to be place for dressing and date of switch on confirmed with company.

5 Entertainment

Four primary schools have confirmed participation

* Twyn School
* Ysgol Gymraeg Caerffili
* Plasyfelin
* Cwrt Rawlin

A request had been received to perform from Caerphilly branch of Superchoir. They could be usefully included with the 4 schools to fill the hour 6 to 7 up to the switch on.

6 Father Christmas and Sleigh

There was a suggestion that Father Christmas could appear from within the community centre and dispense with the Sleigh and perhaps obviate the need for the road closure on Cardiff Road. However arrangements for the road closures were well advanced for 2024 and any change to Father Christmas arrival would be considered for future events.

7 PA Contingencies

In view of the problems that arose in 2023 it was previously agreed that contingency arrangements would be investigated using a combination of Town Council / Community Centre equipment should a back up become necessary.

8 Future of event

The precedent has been set that wider traffic and pedestrian management will be required for future switch on events beyond the Twyn adding to costs and more onerous organisation. The Town Council is under resourced for large scale events. Numbers attending in 2022 and 2023 have put pressure on the space available to safely manage the event on the Twyn.

9 Collaborative arrangements with CCBC

It has been suggested that if Cardiff Road has to be closed for the Christmas Lights switch on that there could be a bigger event in the town centre in collaboration with CCBC. There are practical considerations as the Winter Fair and Lantern Parade take place only two weeks after the switch on involving town centre road closures.

**Fireworks Display**

At the Town Council meeting on 16 September 2024 the principle of reinstating the fireworks display at Caerphilly Castle was agreed with the timing being dependent on agreement with Cadw. The resource implications for planning and managing a large scale event were referred to the Working Group for review of options and budget implications. The Town Clerk outlined the wide scope of actions necessary, and that the Town Council is under resourced to take on the planning and management of such a large scale event, especially as the event happens in the same month as the Christmas Lights switch on and the preparation of the annual estimates for the following financial year. Currently there is no public liability insurance cover for fireworks display and this would be subject to a separate premium at such time as the event proceeds. To hold cover the insurers have specific requirements for fireworks displays. A number of options with indicative costs were set out in the discussion paper and the Town Clerk highlighted the pros and cons of each of the options.

The Working Group acknowledged that to increase resources would have an implication for the precept but felt unable to make any firm recommendation to the Town Council.

The Town Clerk reminded the Working Group that the budget estimates for 2025/26 would be subject of a report to the November meeting of the Town Council when the precept for the new financial year would have to be agreed. A decision would therefore need to be made at that time as to how the Town Council wishes to proceed with regard to the major events.

Phil Davy

Town Clerk

**Agenda Item 8.6**

**Report to Town Council 18 November 2024**

**Budget Estimates 2025/26**

The revised estimates for the current year project that expenditure will exceed income by £4814 which requires a contribution from balances. This is significantly lower than the projection of a £32140 contribution from balances when the estimates for the current year were approved in November 2023. There is a small increase in income of £950 which is due to larger CIL contribution, offset by no fireworks sponsorship and street collection. Expenditure is projected to be £26375 lower than the original estimate. This is primarily due to the fireworks not taking place in 2024 resulting in a budget saving of £20000.

Although the rate of inflation has fallen resulting in costs rising more slowly the economic pressures remain for both households and businesses. The precept of £15.50 for a Band D property has been held at this rate for the last five years and to continue to do this will mean using balances to achieve a balanced budget. Balances can only be used once and are not normally the appropriate strategy for meeting recurring revenue expenditure. The balances have built up in the last 5 years due to cancelled events and generally lower expenditure so there is a good argument to part utilise the balances to absorb inflationary pressures. But this limits the scope of activities to the status quo and does not address the issue of resourcing major events (Christmas Lights and Fireworks Display). This issue was discussed at the Events Working Group, but the Members present felt unable to make any recommendation due to the implications for the precept. The assumptions below are therefore subject to change in light of any decisions on resourcing major events, subject to the report at Agenda Item 8.5, and may impact the setting of the precept for 2025/26.

In preparing the budget estimates for 2025/26 to maintain the status quo the following assumptions are made:

* No increase in the precept which is kept at £15.50 for Band D properties
* Inflationary pressures are absorbed through use of balances
* Mandatory allowances budgeted for all Members
* No provision for carers costs (mandatory if eligible claim)
* No provision for optional allowances (except for Mayor and out of county borough travel)
* No new areas of expenditure (pending decisions relating to resourcing of major events)
* No change to staff resources other than local government pay award – provision of 3% for existing employees

Taking these assumptions into account a budget expenditure of £140015 is proposed. This is an increase of £25650 on the revised projected expenditure for the current financial year. Income is projected at £109700 (89% relates to the precept) which is on a par with the revised income for the current financial year. The excess of expenditure over income will require £30315 to be met from balances to achieve a balanced budget.

The outturn position for 2024/25 is a projection and is subject to change over the remaining part of the financial year which will affect the carried forward balances (either plus or minus). The estimates show that the call on balances in 2025/26 will result in a 29% reduction. Members should be aware that the level of expenditure proposed for 2025/26 cannot be sustained in future years without an increase in the precept, or alternatively reducing expenditure through savings, or a combination of both.

In the absence of a street collection at the fireworks display in the last five years it has been the practice to agree a donation to the Mayor’s charity of £2000 for an individual organisation for which a budget was established within the estimates.

Recommendations

1 Members approve the budget estimates for 2025/26 set out in the attached tables, subject to any amendment relating to resourcing of major events dependent on the decisions made relating to the report at Agenda Item 8.5.

2 The Council Tax for Band D properties is set at £15.50 for 2025/26 subject to any amendment relating to resourcing of major events dependent on the decisions made relating to the report at Agenda Item 8.5.

3 The budget is updated as necessary following completion of the year end accounts in April 2025.

4 A donation of £2000 is approved to the Mayor’s chosen charity, Alzheimer’s Wales, for financial year 2024/25 in accordance with established practice in the absence of a street collection.

Phil Davy

Town Clerk

**Footnote**

The changes to employer’s National Insurance from April 2025 outlined in the Budget on 30 October 2024 will have implications for the Town Council. The estimates attached do not include for the increase in NIC. It is calculated that the employer cost will almost double from the current level as a consequence of the increase to 15% and the lowering of the threshold to £5000 (approximately an extra £1000).

**Cyngor Tref Caerffili**

**Caerphilly Town Council**

**Estimates 2025/2026 - Income**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Actual Received**  **2023/24**  **£** | **Original**  **Estimate**  **2024/25**  **£** | **Revised**  **Estimate**  **2024/25**  **£** | **Estimate**  **2025/26**  **£** |
| Precept | 97404.64 | 97500.00 | 97485.24 | 97500.00 |
| Bank Interest | 266.59 | 100.00 | 663.51 | 200.00 |
| VAT | 5877.93 | 5000.00 | 5174.89 | 5000.00 |
| CIL | 0 | 1000.00 | 6226.76 | 2000.00 |
| Fireworks Sponsorship | 0 | 3000.00 | 0 | 3000.00 |
| Fireworks Collection | 0 | 2000.00 | 0 | 2000.00 |
| Miscellaneous | 25.00 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
|  | | | |  |
| **Total Income** | 103574.16 | 108600 | 109550.40 | 109700.00 |

**Cyngor Tref Caerffili**

**Caerphilly Town Council**

**Estimates 2025/2026 – Expenditure**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Actual**  **2023/24**  **£** | **Original**  **Estimate**  **2024/25**  **£** | **Revised**  **Estimate**  **2024/25**  **£** | **Estimate**  **2025/26**  **£** |
| **Members** |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Town Mayors Allowance | 900.00 | 900.00 | 900.00 | 900.00 |
| Members Allowances | 2288.00 | 2500.00 | 2288.00 | 2500.00 |
| Civic Regalia | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Travelling | 41.68 | 100.00 | 0 | 200.00 |
| Election Costs | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Staff** |  |  |  |  |
|  | | | |  |
| Salaries /Statutory Deductions | 22571.26 | 22700.00 | 23600.00 | 24360.00 |
| Travelling | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Payroll Admin | 93.00 | 120.00 | 114.00 | 120.00 |
| Pension (Employer) | 174.36 | 170.00 | 174.36 | 185.00 |
| Employer N.I. | 1073.72 | 1000.00 | 1100.00 | 1200.00 |
| Audit Fee | 455.00 | 600.00 | 1907.00 | 1800.00 |
| Insurance | 1149.22 | 1500.00 | 1231.27 | 1500.00 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Administration** |  |  |  |  |
|  | | | |  |
| Office Rent / Business Rates | 4338.75 | 6000.00 | 6000.00 | 6000.00 |
| Tel/Postage/Stationery | 776.91 | 1500.00 | 1500.00 | 2000.00 |
| Furniture/Equipment | 0 | 1000.00 | 1000.00 | 1000.00 |
| IT / IT Support | 1227.23 | 2500.00 | 2500.00 | 2000.00 |
| Training | 0 | 1000.00 | 0 | 1000.00 |
| **Sub total C/F** | 35089.13 | 41590.00 | 42314.63 | 44765.00 |

**Cyngor Tref Caerffili**

**Caerphilly Town Council**

**Estimates 2025/2026 - Expenditure**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Actual**  **2023/24**  **£** | **Original**  **Estimate**  **2024/25**  **£** | **Revised**  **Estimate**  **2024/25**  **£** | **Estimate**  **2025/26**  **£** |
| **Brought forward** | 35089.13 | 41590.00 | 42314.63 | 44765.00 |
|  | | | |  |
| Sponsored Events | 14038.24 | 19800.00 | 18000.00 | 19000.00 |
| Concessionary Hires | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fireworks Display | 0 | 20000.00 | 0 | 20000.00 |
| Floral Displays | 14803.80 | 17000.00 | 16800.00 | 17500.00 |
| Christmas Lights | 8291.39 | 10000.00 | 10000.00 | 10000.00 |
| Lantern Parade | 11000.00 | 11000.00 | 11000.00 | 11000.00 |
| Financial Assistance (Grants) | 3400.00 | 6000.00 | 6000.00 | 6000.00 |
| Sports Scheme | 5000.00 | 9000.00 | 5000.00 | 5000.00 |
| Fireworks Charity Donations | 2000.00 | 4000.00 | 2000.00 | 4000.00 |
| Floodlighting – St Martin’s Church | 126.52 | 400.00 | 400.00 | 400.00 |
| Subscriptions | 288.00 | 300.00 | 350.00 | 350.00 |
| Twinning | 89.99 | 250.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 |
| Newsletter | 805.00 | 900.00 | 900.00 | 900.00 |
| Miscellaneous | 75.00 | 500.00 | 1500.00 | 1000.00 |
| VAT | 5174.89 | VAT included in above figures | | |
| CIL Projects | 0 |  | | |
|  | | | |  |
| **TOTAL** | 100181.96 | 140740.00 | 114364.63 | 140015.00 |

**Cyngor Tref Caerffili**

**Caerphilly Town Council**

**Estimates 2025/2026 Balances**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Actual**  **2023/24**  **£** | **Original**  **Estimate**  **2024/25**  **£** | **Revised**  **Estimate**  **2024/25**  **£** | **Estimate**  **2025/26**  **£** |
| **Balances B/F** | 105580.61 | 95180.18 | 108972.81 | 104158.58 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Excess of Expenditure  over Income |  | - 32140.00 | - 4814.23 | - 30315.00 |
| Surplus of Income  over Expenditure | +3392.20 |  |  |  |
|  | | | | |
| **Balances C/F** | +108972.81 | +63040.18 | +104158.58 | +73843.58 |

£

Balance B/F from 2023/24 108972.81

Revised Income 2024/25 109550.40

218523.21

Less revised expenditure 2024/25 114364.63

104158.58

Bank account balances projected at 31.03.25

£

Current Account 36429.02

Operational Reserves 51247.56

Restricted Reserves 16482.00

104158.58

**Agenda Item 8.7**

**Report to Town Council 18 November 2024**

**Charter for Community and Town Councils**

Following the creation of Caerphilly County Borough Council in 1996 a charter was agreed to govern the relationship between the principal council (CCBC) and the community and town councils within the county borough. This sets out the responsibilities for exchange of information, liaison, and consultation on specific subjects. There is an established Community Council Liaison Sub Committee which meets periodically. The Town Council’s nominated representative on this committee is town councillor P J Bevan. There have been some minor changes to the document at various times but no substantive change. The observance of the provisions of the charter in practice have been variable.

Recently the Town and Community Council Liaison Committee (local councils only within the county borough) has raised concern at the way the sector is treated by the principal council and the ineffectiveness of the charter provisions. The Committee has agreed to request that amendments to section 2 of the document “Liaison between the County Borough Council and Community Councils” should be made with the insertion of the following new clauses:

“Ensure that town and community councillors are recognised and afforded respect as holders of public office when dealing with CCBC staff via either contact centre or in dealing with officers in representation of the local electorate.”

“Ensure that consideration is given to the schedule of monthly town and community council meetings when planning community initiatives to ensure adequate notice is provided to the relevant councils for their input and involvement (for example, community cleansing activities and town centre stakeholder meetings etc)”

It is recommended that the Town Council support the proposed amendments to the charter.

Phil Davy

Town Clerk

**Agenda Item 8.8**

**Report to Town Council 18 November 2024**

**Local Government Pay Agreement 2024/25**

The National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC) has reached agreement on rates of pay applicable from 1 April 2024, covering the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025. The new pay rates are based on an increase of £1290 or 2.5% whichever is higher on each spinal column point (SCP). Neither the Town Clerk or Administrative Assistant are on a SCP that would trigger the 2.5% and therefore the lump sum payment would apply based on the pro rata hours for each officer.

The following increases would apply:

Administrative Assistant monthly increase £26.15

Town Clerk monthly increase £49.39

Provision was made in the budget for 2024/25 for a pay increase of 3% (minute no 71.1 20.11.23)

If the new pay scales are adopted by the Town Council the annual increase in salary costs will be £906.48 (based on pro rata hours for the Administrative Assistant and Town Clerk). A 3% increase in current salaries would be £679.50. The pay agreement will therefore require an additional £226.98 virement to salaries to meet the full costs in 2024/25.

Recommendation

Members are invited to determine whether they wish to implement the local government pay agreement effective from 1 April 2024 as approved by the NJC

Phil Davy

Town Clerk

**Agenda Item 9**

**Report to Town Council 18 November 2024**

**Planning Matters**

This is the list of all planning applications received since the last Town Council meeting in September 2024. The applications were circulated to Members as soon as received from CCBC. They are included on the agenda as confirmation of consultation by the Local Planning Authority. No further discussion is required as in most cases the deadline for response has already passed. Where representations have been made on any planning application they are noted.

**24/0663/HH 60 Heol Trecastell, Caerphilly CF83 1AD**

Erect a two storey rear extension

**24/0679/FULL BT Telephone Exchange, Florence Grove, Caerphilly**

Remove glass panes from window on east elevation of the exchange, install aluminium louvre

**24/0604/ADV Unit 11 Castle View Shopping Centre, Cae Meillion, Caerphilly**

Erect fascia signage and glazing panels

**24/0688/FULL The Courthouse, Cardiff Road, Caerphilly CF83 1FN**

Form a new electrical cupboard to the front elevation of the building

**24/0689/LBC The Courthouse, Cardiff Road, Caerphilly CF83 1FN**

Form a new electrical cupboard to the front elevation of the building

**24/0694/HH 85 Bartlett Street, Caerphilly, CF83 1JU**

Demolish rear single storey, erect two storey extension with and extended single storey and convert loft

**24/0701/HH 37 Windsor Street, Caerphilly CF83 1FW**

Erect extension to rear of property

**24/0709/NCC Cwm Ffrwd, Blackbrook Road, Caerphilly CF83 1NF**

Vary conditions of planning 5/5/85/0529 (Erect bungalow – pig farming) (that the occupation of the dwelling shall be limited to a person solely or mainly employed, or last employed in the locality in agriculture as defined in Section 290 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1971, or in forestry, or a dependent of such person residing with him or her, or a widow or widower of such person) to amend the wording of the condition

**24/0732/TPO 10 Castell Morgraig, Caerphilly CF83 3JH**

Decrease height of Oak Tree to the rear of property for safety TPO(63/89/RVDC)

**24/0733/HH 9 Lon y garwa, Watford, Caerphilly CF83 1NL**

Erect single storey wrap around side / front extension

**24/0751/TCA Caerphilly Castle, Castle Street, Caerphilly CF83 1JD**

Fell and prune trees – Ash die back tree removal and ivy removal

**24/0754/RET 40 Meadowland Close, Caerphilly CF83 3SB**

Retain gazebo / pergola in back garden

**24/0776/HH Cyncoed, 35 Mountain Road, Caerphilly CF83 1HH**

Convert loft with hip to gable extensions, side dormers and raised ridge with front elevation veranda, additional parking and associated landscaping

**24/0758/RET Ffos Caerffili, Park Lane, Caerphilly**

Retain stretch gazebo and fittings

**24/0768/NCC Creazione Fitness Co, Unit A, Block E, Sparks House, Weston Industrial Estate**

Vary condition 02 (Approved Plans) of Planning Consent 24/0172/FULL (Erect ground floor extension to the rear of the property with ancillary parking provision) to replace the consented plans with amended plans

**24/0790/HH 33 Lewis Drive, Caerphilly CF83 3FT**

Erect front porch and 2 storey rear extension and internal alterations

**24/0770/ADV Unit 27, Castle Court, Caerphilly CF83 1NU**

Erect illuminated fascia signage

**24/0795/FULL Land at Grid Ref 316176 187695, Meadowland Close, Caerphilly**

Erect 8 no dwellings and associated landscaping, drainage and highways access

**Agenda Item 10.1**

**Report to Town Council 18th November 2024**

**List of Payments**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Cheque No** | **Payee** | **In Respect of** | **Amount £** |
| Internet | EE Ltd | Mobile Phone | 11.84 |
| Internet | BT | Broadband Service | 42.13 |
| Direct Debit | Sage Global Services Ltd | Payroll Software | 12.00 |
| 304247 | M Prew | Mayors Allowance No 2 | 225.00 |
| Internet | HMRC | Income Tax & NI | 650.64 |
| Internet | Admin Assistant | Salary (September) | 464.95 |
| Internet | Town Clerk | Salary (September) | 841.59 |
| Direct Debit | NEST | Pension (September) | 33.90 |
| Internet | Digital Systems UK Ltd | Printing | 51.18 |
| Internet | EE Ltd | Mobile Phone | 11,84 |
| Internet | CCBC | Sports Scheme | 5000.00 |
| Internet | Twyn Community Centre | Rent/Room Hire | 816.00 |
| Debit Card | Amazon Business | Sweets – Christmas Lights | 47.76 |
| Debit Card | Cadbury Gifts Direct | Selection Packs – Christmas Lights | 304.29 |
| Internet | BT | Broadband Service | 42.13 |
| Direct Debit | Sage Global Services Ltd | Payroll Software | 12.00 |
| Internet | Audit Wales | Audit Fees | 207.00 |
| Internet | HMRC | Income Tax & NI | 650.24 |
| Internet | Admin Assistant | Salary (October) | 464.95 |
| Internet | Town Clerk | Salary (October) | 841.99 |
| Direct Debit | NEST | Pension (October) | 33.90 |
| 304248 | Eisteddfod y Cymoedd | Grant | 500.00 |
| Internet | JS Lee (Services) Ltd | Floral Displays | 16800.00 |

It is recommended that Members note and approve the payments.

**Agenda Item 10.2**

**Report to Town Council 18th November 2024**

**Bank Account Balances**

Bank account balances as at 1st November 2024

£

Community Direct Plus Account (current account) 87496.60

Corporate Instant Deposit (operational reserves) 51247.56

Corporate Instant Deposit (restricted reserves) 16,482.00

Members to note the information.

**Agenda Item 13**

**Town Council 18 November 2024**

**Notice of Motion - Councillor P J Bevan**

Councillor P J Bevan has submitted the following Notice of Motion:

“This Council notes with dismay the decision by the UK Government to end automatic winter fuel payments to all pensioners. The decision will cause millions of pensioners across the UK severe hardship and will contribute to the untimely deaths of thousands.

This Council is particularly concerned for the welfare of senior citizens in our community and across Wales in the winter months ahead.

This Council calls on the Wales Secretary Jo Stevens, as Wales representative in the UK Cabinet, and Eluned Morgan as First Minister of Wales to urge Keir Starmer and the UK Government, to restore the Winter Fuel Payment forthwith to all pensioners.”

**Advice from the Town Clerk**

A town (or community) council must not do anything unless it has a legal power to act. The law determines what the council must do (its duties) and what it can choose to do (its powers). If the council acts without a legal power even if it is popular action supported by all Members and the community it could still be charged with acting unlawfully. Council resources should not be used improperly including for political purposes. The council’s powers derive from numerous Acts of Parliament and legislation passed by the Senedd. It is not the council’s role to get involved with political campaigns to change government policy. It is the Town Clerk’s opinion that the motion if approved would be ultra viries, beyond the powers of the Town Council.

This is consistent with advice given in relation to another Notice of Motion in May 2021 relating to lobbying on climate change legislation.

Phil Davy

Town Clerk