



CHIRK TOWN COUNCIL CYNGOR TREF Y WAUN

REPORT OF THE STAFFING AND POLICIES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 15th JULY 2020 **held virtually on-line over video /telephone conferencing**

Present:

Cllrs. Mr Brian Colley (BC) - Chairman,
Mr Mark Holmes (MH),
Mr Gareth Baines (GB),
Clerk to the Council, Mrs Karen Brown (KB).

Mrs Jackie Allen (JA),
Mr Chris Burgoyne (CB),
Mr Mark Roberts (MR),

Mr Frank Hemmings (FH),
Miss Lynne Painter (LP),
Mrs Sarah Williams (SW),

Observers:

Cllrs. Mrs Barbara Humphreys,
Mr Terry Evans.

Ms Eleanor Burnham,

Mrs Dot Griffiths,

1. Apologies

None.

2. Declaration of Interest.

None were reported.

3. Community Agent – new normal plan

The Clerk presented the Community Agent's new normal plan which had been submitted to Wrexham Council for information. The Council gave credit to the work of the Community Agent, looking after vulnerable people within the community. The Council would like to formally thank Yvie for her efforts.

4. Community Agent – additional hours beyond July

The Clerk confirmed that the Community Agent had been funded an additional 8 hours per week since April 2020. Wrexham Council had contributed some additional funds to cover two months and Chirk Town Council had funded the other two months, however the hours beyond July were due for review. Options and costs were discussed.

JA proposed 20 hours for two months (August and September), this is an additional 4 hours on top of the basic 16 hours contracted. GB seconded the proposal. All agreed.

Action: Clerk to inform the Community Agent of the decision and pass on the Council's appreciation.

5. Priorities Action Plan - Quarter 1

The Clerk presented the April – June 2020 progress on the Council's agreed priorities for 2020/21 and sought questions and feedback on the reporting style. Members felt that the report did not highlight any issues in achieving the priorities or any additional support required. Issues and support were discussed. The Clerk stated that the single biggest issue is time/capacity and discussed how things are prioritised. Recruiting to the new admin post is critical as it will bring the much needed additional capacity. The Committee was satisfied with the progress.

6. Parish Hall Fire Report

The Clerk gave the background to this report; she had some concerns about fire safety relating to the lack of a fire risk assessment, fire action notices and evacuation procedures etc. and knew that the Fire Service offered a free site visit with advice, and took up this offer. The Fire Officer did a very thorough visit of the whole building which raised serious concerns. The officer produced a report of his visit, which is shared with Members of the Committee. One of the main recommendations was to undertake a full fire risk assessment conducted by a BAFE registered company. This will then lead to a formal Risk Assessment document which will highlight all areas of concerns, the main point being the lack of a fire detection system within the building.

CB highlighted his concerns as the report shows serious negligence and was also concerned over insurance cover. CB stated that the Council must act urgently. He further suggested to consideration be given to appointing a project manager to oversee the works are completed without delay.

JA was concerned over the lack of compartmentation in the building.

Local fire risk assessors were suggested, however their websites did not show that they had the BAFF registration as required by the Fire Officer.

The Committee recognised the urgency and agreed for the Clerk to get the fire risk assessment undertaken by an external approved company without delay. This was formally proposed by JA and seconded by CB, unanimously agreed.

The Committee agreed that once the risk assessments are received that a special full Council meeting is called in August to go through the report and agree next steps.

Action: Clerk to arrange the fire risk assessment and call a Council meeting once the report is received.

7. Covid Secure Workplace Risk Assessment

The draft Covid secure workplace risk assessment was shared with the Committee for comments. The Policy and procedures for staff will be taken from the risk assessment and shared with staff. GB stated that all staff should see the full risk assessment and sign to state they have read it.

JA asked when the caretakers would be returning to work. KB explained that it is a legal requirement to have this risk assessment in place before staff can return and she was aiming to get the caretakers back to the Parish Hall next week.

The Committee unanimously agreed to **recommend adoption of the risk assessment to Council.**

8. Preparing to re-open the Parish Hall/ playgrounds and visits to peoples homes

Playgrounds – The Welsh Government has announced that playgrounds can re-open from 20th July 2020 however, the annual safety inspection has been delayed due to the lockdown position and the Clerk is awaiting confirmation of the date of the inspection. As soon as the safety inspection has taken place, the playgrounds can re-open. The Clerk will keep Members updated. New signs will need to go up on the gates.

Parish Hall – although the Welsh Government said Community Centres can re-open from 20th July, guidance has not been issued as yet, however it is understood that re-opening is only for very limited activity, e.g. childcare provision, food banks, blood service etc. – services that are classed as a Covid social purpose. Therefore, the caretakers will return to work and will focus on deep cleans, housekeeping etc. Currently no more than two households can meet indoors, which impacts on the ability to hire out the rooms. This situation will be kept under constant review.

Visits to people's homes will need to be looked at separately for when the Community Agent returns to visiting people in their home. There is guidance, but Yvie reports that her clients are happy with phone interaction and would be scared about her going into their homes. It will be a critical part of the Community Agent's work to overcome these fears. The Committee did not want the Community Agent to go into people's homes at this time. However on a case by case basis, visits could be undertaken outside if weather permits.

9. Draft Job description and pay scale for new admin post.

The draft job description was circulated. Two regional Councils have shared their job description and the Clerk sought two additional recruitment packs from current vacancies. One Voice Wales had also provided a model job description. The Clerk also included in the job description for the new post some tasks from her own job description.

The amount of budget which had been allocated over the past two years was £9.50/hour, but based on similar jobs advertised, this was considered to be at the lowest end of the pay scale. Detailed information was provided about similar pay points, and after some discussion, the Committee agreed **that a rate of £10.16/hour be recommended to Council for approval.**

The Clerk sought clarity on the recruitment process and asked if the whole committee wanted to be involved. It was agreed that three members would support the Clerk with the recruitment process. The agreed Councillors were FH, LP & CB with the Chairman taking an overview.

CONFIDENTIAL SECTION

Recorded separately.

Meeting closed 19:50

Signed

Chairman

29th July 2020