

Clerk / Responsible Financial Officer: Mrs Susan Rodaway

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**EXTRAordinary meeting of Mawr Community Council (MCC)**

**Held remotely via Zoom on Friday 31 March 2023 at 7.00 pm**

**KEY POINTS NOTICE**

**PRESENT**: Cllr. L. Frame (LF), Cllr. C. Williams (CW), Cllr. M. Davies (MD), Cllr. D. James (DJ)

**APOLOGIES**:Cllr. LJ. Thomas – maternity leave

**Declarations of Interest:** *None.*

**Questions from the public relating to items on this agenda** (limited to 10 minutes) *None.*

1. **Finance 2023/15**
2. To approve review of Quarters 1,2 and 3.

The Clerk provided an update to members following discussions with the accountant. Members were satisfied with the review.

*Motion Passed. Proposer: MD; Seconder: DJ; Agreed all.*

1. To Agree Financial Risk Assessment 2022/23

Members reviewed the current Financial and Operational Risk Assessments and made amendments as required, combining both in one document for ease of review in subsequent years.

*Council resolved to combine Operational and Financial Risk assessments and approve them. Motion passed. Proposer: MD; Seconder: CW; Agreed all.*

1. To agree Operational Risk Assessment 2022/23

*Taken with point b). above.*

1. To approve purchase of finance package for 2023/24

The Clerk explained the current financial controls in place could be improved in order to free up more Clerk time and presented a finance software package used and recommended by many Clerks. The company had offered an annual contract cost and a significantly reduced cost for a 5-year contract. As the package will be required in future years, members supported the idea of a reduction in cost for a multi-year contract.

*Motion passed. Council resolved to accept the 5-year quote at a reduced cost of £304 p/a. Proposer: MD; Seconder: CW; Agreed all.*

*Under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.
Motion passed. Proposer: CW; Seconder: DJ; Agreed all.*

1. **Staff Matters 2023/16**

It was proposed by MD, seconded by CW, and agreed by all to suspend Standing Order 3x to continue the meeting.

1. To ratify staffing decisions taken *in camera* during 2022/23 and agree to publish appropriate public minutes.

Members considered the *in-camera* meeting minutes from confidential reports and meeting notes from the past financial year until the appointment of the new Clerk. A discussion ensued and those who had been present at the meetings agreed they represented a true and accurate account of those meetings. These ratified decisions are attached to the minutes as Annexe 1.

*Motion passed. Proposer: LF; Seconder: DJ; Agreed all.*

1. To agree Staff Contracts

The Clerk presented contracts for members to consider. Some minor amendments were made by members prior to approval. Clerk to distribute agreed contracts to employees.

*Contracts for the Clerk/RFO, Grants Officer and Biodiversity Project Coordinator were approved. Proposer: DJ; Seconder: MD; Agreed all.*

1. To discuss employee overtime request and agree any action.

*It was agreed to contact employee to update them on progress and advise on next steps. Proposer DJ; Seconder CW; Agreed all.*

**Meeting closed: 22.40**

**Annexe 1**

2022/2023 confidential minutes

To ratify and approve minutes.

April 2022:

No meeting due to the election

May 2022:

1. Proposed that a Councillor should take on responsibility for financial oversight.
2. Cllr GT was proposed, seconded, and unanimously approved.
3. Proposed a Grants Officer should be recruited to increase income.

This was seconded and agreed by all.

1. It was proposed, seconded, and agreed by all to award 2 participatory budget grants to CCP, one to Felindre and a fourth to Garnswllt.
2. Due to issues accessing the Council bank account, staff payments had been delayed. It was proposed that staff should receive an extra salary payment as a thank you for their patience. This was seconded and agreed by all.
3. It was proposed, seconded, and agreed by all that a solicitor’s letter be sent to a contractor in order to recover an overpayment.

June 2022:

1. As no response had been received from the contractor following the issue of a solicitor’s letter, it was proposed, seconded, and agreed to pursue further legal action against the contractor in order to recover the overpayment.
2. A Court hearing brought by a former employee has been confirmed for 18 August 2022. It was proposed, seconded, and agreed by all to appoint a senior barrister to defend the Council at a cost of £750 + VAT.
3. It was proposed, seconded, and agreed by all that the Finance and Personnel Committee be comprised of GT and IP. This will revert to two separate committees once the soon to be co-opted Cllrs are onboard.
4. Garnswllt Hall refurbishment. Further intervention is required to correct an issue with the door/fire exit between the foyer and the main hall. Two options were presented to council:
5. Change the door frame at a cost of £995.00.
6. To buy a new door at £1,395.00.

It was proposed, seconded, and agreed by all to go with option ii. Contract awarded to Sapphire Windows.

1. The council will purchase the main door for CCP HALL.
2. The council will pay for the light bulbs in the MUGA area and the lamp post by the MUGA at Felindre Hall.
3. It was proposed, seconded, and agreed by all for the above expenditure for CCP and Felindre (E & F).
4. Co-option of new Councillors. There were 10 applicants, and the successful candidates were proposed, seconded, and agreed by all as follows:

CCP: Darren James, Laura-Jayne Thomas, Rhysian Phillips

Felindre: Caroline Williams

Garnswllt: Gaynor Price

July 2022:

It was proposed, seconded, and agreed by all that the post of Grants Officer will be advertised in August with interviews to take place in September.

August 2022:

Recess

September 2022:

1. Due to irreconcilable differences, it was proposed, seconded, and agreed by all to terminate the informal arrangement between Llangyfelach Football Club and Felindre Welfare Hall as of November 12, 2022.

October 2022:

1. The Biodiversity Officer’s resignation was noted along with a request they complete a progress report for reporting to the LAG as their post was funded by an RDP grant.
2. It was proposed, seconded, and agreed by all to re-advertise the post to complete the project.
3. It was discussed that the Clerk should not be working outside their contracted hours, and they were reminded that their contracted hours are 20 per week, 9am to 1pm, Monday to Friday with some flexibility for evening meetings.
4. Following a disappointing internal audit report, it was discussed that the previous temporary clerk had been appointed to manage council administration and finances, including the 2021/22 Audit. However, it was now agreed the Current clerk and chair would work to complete the audit by October 31, 2022.

November 2022:

1. It was noted that applications had been received and it was proposed, seconded, and agreed unanimously to interview the candidate with appropriate qualifications for the role. The candidate would be offered a choice of interview dates and the Clerk will contact them to arrange. This was proposed, seconded, and agreed by all.
2. The previous Clerk had made an error with the rates of pay for the current Clerk. The salary adjustments from December 2021 to April 2022 will be paid with the November 2022 salary.
3. It was proposed, seconded, and approved by all that the salary scale adjustments from April 2022 are to be paid retrospectively with the November 2022 salary.
4. It was proposed, seconded, and agreed the Hall Supervisor Salaries would be reviewed.
5. It was proposed, seconded, and agreed by all that IP and CW be added as additional signatories to the Council bank account.
6. It was proposed, seconded, and agreed by all that the licence agreements for the Halls be reviewed. The Clerk will contact One Voice Wales to progress.
7. It was proposed, seconded, and agreed by all to appoint DAS to begin proceedings against the contractor owing the Council money.
8. It was proposed, seconded, and agreed by all to purchase selection boxes up to a value of £400 as agreed in the budget. Any remaining funds would be re-deposited in the bank account.

December 2022:

1. The Clerk’s annual leave request was proposed, seconded, and agreed by all.
2. It was proposed, seconded, and agreed by all to pay a bonus payment to relevant staff.
3. It was proposed, seconded, and agreed by all the Clerk should produce a spreadsheet of expenditure by the Council on Garnswllt Welfare Hall and establish how much has been reimbursed and how much remained outstanding.
4. Co-option – The Chair left the room as she declared interest in this section of the meeting.
5. Cllr IP chaired this section. It was proposed seconded and agreed by all present (LJ abstain) Mr. Martin Davies to be co-opted as councillor for CCP.
6. Following the Clerk’s resignation, it was proposed, seconded, and agreed by all to advertise the position before Christmas. The advert would be posted in all 8 noticeboards, the Council website, via One Voice Wales, Swansea, and Neath Port Talbot Local Authorities vacancies. This would mean the vacancy would also be posted on the Indeed recruitment website.

January 2023:

1. It was proposed, seconded, and agreed by all to interview all 4 applicants for the position of Clerk/RFO with interviews to be held on the evenings of 17th and 18th January.
2. It was proposed, seconded, and agreed by all that the Personnel Committee (IP, GP, MD, LF) would conduct the Interviews and recommend a successful candidate to Full Council. One Voice Wales advice had been sought at all stages of the recruitment process. The Interviews would be structured with all candidates being asked the same questions. An Extraordinary Meeting would be convened to ratify the decision made by the Personnel Committee.
3. It was proposed, seconded, and agreed by all that Catherine Curtis would be employed as the new Biodiversity Project Coordinator on the same pay and conditions as the previous role holder.
4. It was proposed, seconded, and agreed by all that Terrie Cousins would be employed as the new Grants Officer on the same pay and conditions as the previous role holder.
5. It was noted that Cllr Linda Frame has been nominated to sit on the National Executive Committee of One Voice Wales.
6. Following feedback from the Personnel Committee, it was their recommendation that Susan Rodaway be appointed as Clerk/RFO to Mawr Community Council on the same salary spine point as the previous role holder. This was proposed, seconded, and agreed by all.
7. It was proposed, seconded, and agreed the new Clerk/RFO would begin work on February 15th to ensure a little overlap for handover before the current Clerk/RFO went on annual leave.

February 2023:

1. It was proposed seconded and agreed by all that the current Biodiversity Project Coordinator’s contract be extended for six months until 31 August 2023. The council also agreed to research potential grants to assist with retaining the post for a longer period.