



**THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL OF ABERTILLERY & LLANHILLETH  
CYNGOR CYMUNED ABERTYLERI A LLANHILLEDD**

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Our Ref: **NOTICE OF MEETING**

15 January 2020

Dear Councillor

You are summoned to attend a meeting of the Council of Abertillery and Llanhilleth Community Council, to be held in the Council Chamber, Mitre Street, Abertillery on **Wednesday 22 January 2020 at 7.00pm**. The agenda for the meeting is set out below.

The Council may suspend standing order 3(x) if it wishes the meeting to last beyond two hours, at the appropriate point in the meeting.

Yours sincerely

Richard Gwinnell  
Town Clerk

## **AGENDA**

**1. Apologies for absence and welcomes**

**2. Declarations of interest or dispensations**

Members who consider that they have an interest to declare are asked to state the item in which they have an interest and the nature of the interest. Any member who is unsure should seek advice prior to the meeting in order to expedite matters at the meeting itself.

**3. Minutes: Council: (a) 30 October 2019 (b) 18 November 2019 (c) 20 November 2019 and (d) 11 December 2019 (attached)**

To be confirmed as a correct record of the meeting.

**4. Minutes: Finance and Grants Committee: (a) 14 November 2019 (b) 2 December 2019 (attached)**

To be noted (as the committee has already confirmed them as a correct record).

**5. Minutes: Human Resources Committee: 29 November 2019 (attached)**

To be confirmed as a correct record of the meeting (by the committee) and noted (by Council).

**6. Questions from the public:** To receive public questions and provide answers where possible.

**7. Finance Order (attached):** To consider spending decisions and the current financial position.

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8. **Budget 2019/20 Quarter 3 report (attached):** To consider an update on the current year budget as at the end of Quarter 3 (31 December) and a year-end forecast.
9. **Budget and Precept 2020/21 (attached):** To agree the budget and precept for 2020/21.
10. **Financial Risks: Payment of Precept and Bank Accounts:** To consider financial risks faced by the Council and actions to mitigate these risks.

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF ABERTILLERY AND LLANHILLETH COMMUNITY COUNCIL  
(ALCC) HELD ON 30 OCTOBER 2019 at 7.00pm  
in the Council Chamber, Mitre Street, Abertillery**

**PRESENT: Councillors:**

Peter Adamson, Keri Bidgood, Gill Clark (Chair) (in the Chair), Roger Clark, Tracey Dyson, Julie Holt, Mark Lewis, Beverley Lucas, Perry Morgan, Gary Oakley, Rob Phillips, Tracy Postlethwaite, Nick Simmons and Glyn Smith

**Officers:** Richard Gwinnell, Town Clerk

**Others:** Michaela Assiratti (as a member of the public until item 6 (minute 96 below) and as a Councillor after that item)

**ABSENT:** Councillors Amanda Edwards, Allen Rees, Bernard Wall and Graham White

**90. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND WELCOMES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Allen Rees.

New Councillor Tracy Postlethwaite was welcomed to her first meeting. Michaela Assiratti, who had applied to be co-opted onto the Council, was also welcomed to the meeting.

**91. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No members declared any personal interests.

**92. MINUTES: COUNCIL – 18 SEPTEMBER 2019**

**Council RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 18 September 2019 be confirmed as a correct record, for signature by the Chair.

**93. MINUTES: COUNCIL – 25 SEPTEMBER 2019**

**Council RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 25 September 2019 be confirmed as a correct record, for signature by the Chair.

**94. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

There were no public questions for this meeting.

**95. COUNCIL ACTION LIST**

The Clerk outlined the action sheet and answered questions.

**Council RESOLVED:**

(1) to note the updates shown in the action list

(2) to remove the following items from the action list:

Meeting	Minute ref.	Decision / action required	By whom	Position
Council 26.9.18	62(4)	Investigate facilitating a quarterly problem solving and business networking session; any costs to come back to Council for approval	Shop Local Working Group	Meetings are taking place as part of the Shop Local WG
Council 21.11.18	138(3)	Blaina Riots Plinth – seek further details of the help or funding they are asking ALCC for	Clerk/ Deputy	No response was received. Too much time passed
HR Ctte 10.12.18	151	Meet in new year (2019) re staff job descriptions	HR Ctte	Too much time passed
Council 12.12.18	156	Ask for more details of the Ebbw Fach Crime Prevention Panel and let members know	Clerk/Deputy	No response was received. Too much time passed
Council 12.12.18	172(2)	Enter into [a payroll service provision] agreement with BGCBC if possible	Clerk/Deputy	Completed
Council 20.2.19	201(3)	Report back following discussions with BGCBC re Jubilee Square gates and cleaning	Cllr J Holt	Completed

## 96. COUNCILLOR VACANCIES

The Clerk reported that an application for co-option into the vacant Aberbeeg seat had been received from Michaela Assiratti (who was also currently known as Tina Silverthorne, pending an intended change of name). He circulated the application for members to read.

**Council RESOLVED** to co-opt Michaela Assiratti (aka Tina Silverthorne) onto the Council as a Councillor for the Aberbeeg ward.

Michaela Assiratti signed her declaration of acceptance of office and became a Councillor at that point. She attended the rest of the meeting as a Councillor.

## 97. COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

Comments were made and questions answered about the membership of the Shop Local Working Group and about the number of members on some working groups.

**Council RESOLVED:**

- (1) to appoint Councillor Michaela Assiratti to the Planning and Environment Committee
- (2) to appoint Councillor Michaela Assiratti to the Leisure and Tourism Working Group
- (3) to appoint Councillor Tracy Postlethwaite to the Leisure and Tourism Working Group
- (4) to note Councillor Gary Oakley's resignation from the Leisure and Tourism Working Group (due to the number of other members on that group)
- (5) to appoint Councillor Tracy Postlethwaite to the Shop Local Working Group.

## **98. FINANCE ORDER**

The Clerk outlined the finance order, commenting particularly on the more detailed format and the recommendations. The new format was welcomed by members and questions were asked and answered, about the potential for additional staff costs in this financial year and the ability for the Council to move money back out of reserves if it needed to.

### **Council RESOLVED:**

- (1) to note the payments listed in Table 1 and Table 2
- (2) to authorise the payments listed in Table 3
- (3) to note the current financial position on the current and reserve accounts
- (4) to transfer £20,000 from the current account to the reserve account (this £20,000 was the as-yet unspent additional "project staffing" budget)
- (5) to transfer £5,000 from the current account to the reserve account (this £5,000 was the as-yet unspent external auditor fees) and
- (6) to ringfence the £5,000 external audit fees within reserves, until such time as payment is required.

## **99. SOLAR FARM GRANT 2018: PROGRESS**

The Council considered progress reports attached to the agenda, which the Clerk outlined. Comments were made by various members that:

- excellent progress was being made
- anyone who visited Cwmtillery Lakes could see the progress for themselves
- progress on developing a community café in the Jim Owen Pavilion was however disappointingly slow
- it was crucial that a community café was delivered
- there was a long way to go till the end of March.

**Council RESOLVED** to note the progress reported.

## **100. SOLAR FARM GRANTS CRITERIA**

The Clerk reminded members of the criteria adopted by Council on 25 September 2019. Queries had been raised since then about the so-called "5 year rule" (criterion 17) which read:

"The Council will not give Solar Farm Grants to the same organisation(s) within five consecutive years unless in exceptional circumstances".

A member had interpreted this to mean that any applications from organisations which had received funding within the last five years need not be considered this year and should be rejected prior to the Solar Farm Grant Working Group (SFGWG) meeting, which had been due to be held on 18 October. Another member had supported this interpretation, with an opinion about the legal interpretation of the wording. The Chair of the SFGWG had called off the SFGWG meeting, due to the lack of agreement on the meaning of the criteria and its potential effect on applications. Two organisations had been told (by a councillor) not to apply at all, because of the so called 5 year rule, as they had received solar farm grants

two years ago.

The Chair stated that organisations which had applied and received funding in 2017 did not know then, that they could be prevented from doing so for another five years, due to a rule introduced in 2019 by the Council. Backdating this new rule was therefore unfair. That was why she had asked for the criteria to come back to the Council for clarification, before any applications for funding were considered.

Members debated the issue at length, with the following main comments being made:

- the 5 year rule did not specify that it was only applicable from 2019, forwards
- the 5 year rule should apply from when solar farm grants started in 2017
- criterion 17 said the Council would not give a solar farm grant to the same organisation within five years, and should be read “on the face of” the words used, meaning they should apply backwards and forwards (to a whole five years)
- some organisations may not have applied this year, because they had read that rule in the retrospective context
- the rule meant that organisations which had received funding within the last 5 years could not apply again
- the 5 year rule had not been specified by the Council until now, so the Council could only apply it from now
- the Council should clarify that the rule applied from September 2019 and re-advertise, allowing other organisations to apply within two weeks (as was allowed previously)
- legal advice should be sought on the 5 year rule.

The Clerk was asked to advise. He advised that:

- the Council could not adopt such a rule in 2019 and apply it backwards
- like new laws, it could only be applied from the date it was adopted
- applying the new rule from a date in years past could potentially exclude people who had received funding previously, when they did not know previously that they would be excluded
- if applicants had known in 2017 that they would not get funding for a further 5 years, they may not have applied at all in 2017, or may have applied for a different amount
- organisations excluded by the 5 year rule (if applied retrospectively) might challenge that decision
- if challenged, the courts were likely to look at the intention of the words (not just the words themselves) and the reasonableness of the decision
- he (the Clerk) had written the words, based on discussions at the working group and in Council meetings over a long period of time
- he was the author of the words and his intention (when he wrote the words) was that the 5 year rule would be applied going forward, not looking back
- most people in his view would consider that to be the most reasonable approach.

Councillor Oakley expressed the view that the Clerk was advising Council to take an unlawful decision. He asked for this to be recorded in the minutes.

The Clerk advised further that:

- all applications should be considered by the Council on their merits
- there may be exceptional circumstances which the Council needed to consider
- no-one should be told by a councillor, that they could not apply at all
- anyone who had been told that should be informed otherwise; and should be given a fair chance to apply
- there were potentially many different interpretations of various criteria
- he had been asked to advise and was doing so, as he was the Clerk to the Council.

Further comments were made by various members, including that:

- the Council needed to look at all applications received on their merits
- there may be exceptional circumstances
- the 5 year rule hampered the Council in its decision making
- the working group should look at all applications and make recommendations to the Council, as it was asked to do (at the September meeting)
- the working group would decide the applications
- the Council was “making heavy weather” of this; it needed to allow for exceptional circumstances and give itself room to decide the best option.

The Clerk advised further that:

- the Council could decide to change the wording of criterion 17 if it wished
- it should make clear that the 5 year rule applied from the 2019 round of solar farm grant funding forwards
- it should in that case re-advertise and allow a further two weeks for organisations to apply, in case they had not applied, because of the 5 year rule
- alternatively, Council could decide if it wished to remove the 5 year rule altogether, so that there was more flexibility for the Council (as it may wish to fund multi-year, higher value projects)
- the working group could only recommend; not decide to exclude some applicants
- it was not a committee and did not have delegated powers to decide
- the Council should receive all applications, along with recommendations from the working group
- if Council wished, it could receive the applications directly, without the need for the working group to consider the applications first
- the criteria needed to be clarified, as people had already been excluded due to them being told (by a councillor) not to apply.

Councillor Dyson moved that: (a) criterion 17 (the so called “5 year rule”) be removed and (b) that ALCC advertise for a further two weeks, to enable any other organisation to apply (who may not have applied already, because of the so called “5 year rule”).

A member stated that the previous decision would have to be rescinded. This could not be done without the prior notice and special motion required in Standing Orders.

The Clerk read aloud Standing Order 7. He explained that this prevented the reversal of a previous decision, unless there was the required notice and special motion. It did not

prevent the Council changing or clarifying the criteria (short of reversing them altogether).

Councillor Simmons moved an amendment: that independent legal advice be sought on the 5 year rule.

The Clerk advised that decisions needed to be made on the allocation of the grant as soon as possible. He questioned the cost and time implications of seeking external legal advice.

Councillor Smith moved a further amendment: that legal advice on the 5 year rule be sought from One Voice Wales. Councillor Simmons supported this change to his amendment.

**Council RESOLVED** (with 9 members voting in favour): that the Clerk seek legal advice on the 5 year rule from One Voice Wales and report this to the Council's 20 November meeting, if received by then.

## 101. CHRISTMAS 2019

Councillor Phillips reported on progress with preparations for Winterfest, which would be held on Saturday 30 November 2019 from 12pm to 8pm and include:

- Church Street and Arcade: more than 20 craft and other stalls
- Jubilee Square: musical entertainment and bucking reindeer (relocated from Market Street due to the car park being used by The Met that day)
- Ebenezer Chapel: Santa's Grotto
- Foundry Bridge Car Park: funfair
- Museum: story telling with puppets, Animal Attractions and Owl Sanctuary, first aid post, lost children centre and public toilets
- Santa's Procession and Lantern Parade: starting at the Cenotaph (Somerset Street) and TR Centre (Cwm Cottage Road) at 5.30pm, with lanterns handed out by ALCC councillors from 5pm
- Church Street: Santa's procession arrives for Lights Switch On at 6pm
- Publicity: banners, posters and Facebook.

He asked members to volunteer to help on the day with setting up, stalls, handing out lanterns and escorting lost children (if members had a DBS certificate). He also asked if ALCC could provide the usual "car park closed" notices for Market Street. The Clerk confirmed that this would be done.

The Clerk stated that there were two pantomimes being performed this Christmas in The Met. There was no need therefore to buy in a pantomime company from elsewhere, as had been suggested previously. Furthermore, The Met had no days free to perform another pantomime during the Christmas period. The Met had approached the Clerk with a request for funding, to help schools with the costs of sending children to attend the pantomime. It had been suggested that ALCC might provide funding from the £1,300 budgeted (for a pantomime), to help schools with these costs. The Clerk had contacted Abertillery Learning Community staff, who had initially reported that the issue was not a lack of funding; rather a shortage of days available for school trips. He had received no reply to further enquiries, including an email and phone call.



Following a motion from Councillor Simmons:

**Council RESOLVED:**

- (1) to note the updates on Winterfest
- (2) to withdraw the £1,300 budgeted for a pantomime from ALCC's current budget
- (3) to move that £1,300 from the current account to the reserve account.

**102. CHRISTMAS LIGHTS**

Councillor Phillips (Chair of the Christmas Lights Working Group) (CLWG) outlined the recommendations of the CLWG. It had been claimed that the lights in the trees outside Bournville Community Hall (BCH) belonged to BCH. If that was the case, it was assumed they would keep those lights. Hence the proposal was for ALCC also to provide Christmas lights in those trees, as it had done elsewhere.

**Council RESOLVED:**

- (1) that ALCC provides 100m of LED coloured lights in the trees outside Bournville Community Hall
- (2) that these lights be installed and removed at the same time as all other lights under the ALCC contract
- (3) that this section be added to the contract with Centregreat
- (4) that the additional cost (approx. £800 per annum) be met from the Christmas lights budget.

**103. SHOP LOCAL WORKING GROUP (SLWG) REPORT**

Councillor Lewis (Chair of the SLWG) outlined the minutes and recommendations of the SLWG which were attached to the agenda.

The Chair of the L&TWG (Councillor Dyson) objected to the SLWG discussing matters which were within the L&TWG's remit, including the Fun Run and Abertillery in Bloom.

Lengthy discussion ensued on which group was responsible for what, who was leading on various projects, who should report back to which group and so on.

The Clerk circulated the terms of reference of committees and working groups, as at 4 September 2019, and answered questions about when they had been adopted.

Various members suggested that the Council think again about which working groups it needed and which should do what, as working groups had evolved over time, they were less structured than other areas of Council business and there were overlaps.

Discussion ensued on the importance of the well-being agenda and the lack of meetings of the Well-being Working Group. Some members considered that well-being was at the heart of everything ALCC did. It was about the stated five ways of working and making sure all efforts were focussed on achieving the overarching well-being objectives.

Councillor Holt stated that she had started a mapping exercise, to map what ALCC was doing in terms of youth engagement and how that related to the well-being agenda. She had also started a template for other projects. That could be used as evidence of what ALCC was doing to meet the well-being agenda. She was happy to share that work with the Chair of the Well-being Working Group and report back to a future meeting.

Councillor Smith left the meeting at this point.

The Chair of the SLWG confirmed that approval was only required from Council for the purchase of 25 more window stickers. The other matters considered by the SLWG would be discussed further and brought back to Council at a future date.

The Clerk responded to questions about the £500 allocated in 2018 for spending on shop local initiatives. There was no need for Council to approve the purchase of 25 window stickers, as these could be purchased under existing delegations to officers.

**Council RESOLVED:**

- (1) to revisit the terms of reference of committees and working groups at the November Council meeting and
- (2) to note the report back from the SLWG.

**104. REPORTS BACK AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM WORKING GROUPS**

**Youth Engagement Working Group (YEWG):** Councillor Oakley (Chair of the YEWG) referred to recent discussions in the YEWG about the funding for additional youth workers, paid for by ALCC. The Clerk circulated a paper supplied by Councillor Oakley. A copy is available on request. More youth workers were needed to cover shifts. This meant the money provided by ALCC could be used to fund the additional youth workers for six months or nine months, depending on how many nights per week and how many extra youth workers were involved. The YEWG recommended Option 1 in the report. The Council had already allocated the funds, so there was no request for further funding.

**Council RESOLVED:** to agree Option 1 in the report, i.e.:

*To fund 6 x detached youth workers working 9 hours per week, covering 5 days per week. The workers will be split into two teams of three alternating each week. Team 1 will work three nights, Team working two nights and completing paperwork/planning, then swap for Team 2 to work 3 nights and Team 1 working two nights and completing paperwork/planning. This arrangement allows flexibility if any staff are off sick or take annual leave, without having a break in service.*

*6 project workers Scale 5 point 20 x 9 hours per week*

*Hourly rate - £17.31 (£13.11+ 32% on-costs)*

*£17.31 x 9 hours per week = £155.79*

*£155.79 x 26 weeks (6 months) = £4,050.54*

*Total: 6 workers x £4,050.54 = £24,303.24*

*Total costs for 6 months provision, 5 nights per week: £24,303.24.*

#### **105. SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER 3(x)**

Council **RESOLVED** to suspend standing order 3(x) to extend the time limit for the meeting beyond the normal two hours.

Councillors Morgan and Phillips left the meeting at this point.

#### **106. MEMBERS' ROOM**

The Chair suggested that the Members' Room as currently furnished was not suitable for meetings or as a working room and that the comfortable sofas purchased many years ago gave an unprofessional image to visitors. She suggested that the sofas be moved into another room (the Knit and Natter Group had requested that they be moved into the Old Police Room, for their use) and that the Members' Room be refurnished as a proper meeting room, with tables and chairs purchased or sourced (used) e.g. from GAVO.

Two members pointed out that the building was owned by Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council and that they had signalled their intention to review the use of the building in future.

Another member suggested that the room be refurnished for use for small meetings for members or with constituents in the meantime.

**Council RESOLVED** that the sofas be moved from the Members' Room into the Old Police Room and the Members' Room be refurnished as a small meeting room, with tables and chairs purchased or sourced (used) e.g. from GAVO.

#### **107. REPORTS BACK ON RELEVANT TRAINING OR MEETINGS ATTENDED**

The Clerk referred to discussions held at a recent meeting of the One Voice Wales (OVW) Gwent Valleys Area Committee (GVAC) about asking Public Service Boards (PSBs) if town and community councils (T&CCs) in their areas could have a representative(s) on the Boards. OVW had been involved in discussions with Caerphilly PSB, which had recently agreed to have a T&CC rep on their Board. Other GVAC members had suggested that a joint letter be sent to the Blaenau Gwent PSB on behalf of all the T&CCs in the Blaenau Gwent area. The Clerk sought agreement to work with other T&CCs and OVW to send a letter to the Blaenau Gwent PSB, requesting that they allow a T&CC rep on the Board.

Councillor Simmons referred to a recent training session he had attended, where it was made clear that there would be more asset and service transfers (to town and community councils from county borough councils) in future, due to continuing cuts in budgets at County Borough level. He would report further to a future meeting on this issue.

**Council RESOLVED:**

- (1) to note the reports back
- (2) that the Clerk be authorised to work on a letter to the Blaenau Gwent PSB, alongside OVW and other T&CC Clerks, requesting representation for local T&CCs on the PSB
- (3) to receive a report back from Councillor Simmons in due course on the training session he had attended.

**108. CHAIR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS, RELEVANT CORRESPONDENCE AND CELEBRATING SUCCESS**

The Chair reported that she had attended (with Councillor Lucas) the recent GAVO Blaenau Gwent Volunteer Awards evening. This was very successful and, without the crucial work of volunteers, many hugely valuable services to the public (e.g. sports clubs, the museum, drama groups etc) would not exist. She emphasised the importance of ALCC continuing to support such voluntary efforts wherever possible, through Council grants for example.

The Chair reminded members to collect the wreaths they were due to lay for Remembrance Sunday and to collect lamp-post poppies if they wished to put any up in the area. There was a list provided for members to indicate how many poppies they had taken. Another member suggested that the poppies be given to local tenants and residents associations, for them to put up in local areas if they wished.

The Vice-Chair referred to the recent success of Jack Shaw, winning his first UFC fight. This had occurred several weeks ago, so a letter of congratulations now would not be timely. As Celebrating Success had been a matter for decision at Council meetings in the past, staff were reluctant to write with congratulations, without gaining prior Council approval. She asked Council to agree, and:

**Council RESOLVED** that Celebrating Success letters may be sent out by the Council’s staff between Council meetings in future, if members so request.

The meeting ended at 9.15pm.

Signed as a correct record by the Chair .....

*NB these minutes are a summary of the proceedings and record of the decisions taken. They are not intended to be a verbatim record.*

*Minutes produced by Richard Gwinnell, Town Clerk*

**MINUTES OF AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF ABERTILLERY AND LLANHILLETH  
COMMUNITY COUNCIL (ALCC) HELD ON 18 NOVEMBER 2019 at 7.00pm  
in the Council Chamber, Mitre Street, Abertillery**

**PRESENT: Councillors:**

Gill Clark (Chair), Peter Adamson, Michaela Assiratti, Keri Bidgood, Roger Clark, Tracey Dyson, Julie Holt, Mark Lewis, Beverley Lucas, Perry Morgan, Gary Oakley, Rob Phillips, Tracy Postlethwaite, Allen Rees, Nick Simmons, Glyn Smith and Graham White

**Officers:** Richard Gwinnell, Town Clerk and Steve Edwards, Deputy Clerk

**Others:** None

**ABSENT:** Councillor Bernard Wall

**116. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND WELCOMES**

No apologies for absence were received.

**117. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No members declared any personal interests.

**118. SOLAR FARM GRANTS CRITERIA**

The Chair reminded members that they were here principally to discuss and clarify the meaning of criterion 17 of the Solar Farm Grants criteria (adopted by the Council on 25 September 2019) which read:

"The Council will not give Solar Farm Grants to the same organisation(s) within five consecutive years unless in exceptional circumstances".

They were also here to agree the process of decision making going forward and consider the special motion submitted, to rescind two previous decisions about the process.

The Clerk circulated paper copies of the legal advice received from a National Association of Local Councils (NALC) solicitor on 14 November 2019. This had been circulated to all members by email on 14 November 2019. The NALC advice is set out below:

*Client: Abertillery and Llanhilleth Community Council*

*Subject Matter: Solar Farm Grant application criteria*

*I have been allocated this request to advise upon and I have seen your email dated 7 November 2019 together with an email dated 6 November 2019 from the Community Clerk attaching a copy of the Minutes of the Community Council meeting on 25 September 2019 with the documents referred to in Council Minute 77 and related documents in respect of Ward and Council Grants.*

*The issue in this request is the true meaning of criterion 17 in the Solar Farm Grants Scheme which prohibits grants to organisations that have had a grant from the scheme in the previous five years unless there are exceptional circumstances.*

*The main question is whether the five year restriction applies only from its adoption at the meeting on 25 September 2019 or to all grants made under the scheme since it started in 2017.*

*The simple answer is that criterion 17 is the Community Council's criterion and it means whatever it wants it to mean. The question is what did the Community Council intend to be the start date for that criterion when it adopted it? The reality is that the Community Council may not have considered that point at all at the time and therefore needs to decide and clarify the issue now.*

*I note that the Community Clerk made the point that new laws are not retrospective and this is because it is believed to be unfair to make something wrong now which was not wrong when it was actually done. The Council needs to decide whether making criterion 17 retrospective would be unfair on groups who applied for grants previously without knowing that this would ban them from making further applications for five years from 2019. For example a group that applied in 2017 might have also applied in 2018 if it knew that the criteria were going to change in 2019 and freeze them out until 2022. If that situation arose there is a possibility that the group affected could take Judicial Review proceedings against the Council on the basis that making the criterion retrospective was irrational.*

*Once the Council has decided what the wording adopted actually means then it needs to publicise its decision. There is no need for the resolution that adopted the new criteria to be revoked if the Council is simply clarifying when the first five year period will start and this should be set out in a resolution of the Council at a full meeting.*

*If the Council decides that it wishes to amend the overall criteria by removing or altering criterion 17 this can be done by ordinary resolution as the Council is not revoking a previous decision and it is able to modify its existing criteria from time to time.*

*Whenever the new criteria come into effect the Council needs to set up and publicise a procedure for a group to show exceptional circumstances if it intends to apply within five years of a previous grant.*

*I hope that this clarifies the position but if the council requires any further information or advice please contact NALC again.*

The Chair gave members a few minutes to read the NALC advice. All members confirmed that they had read it.

The Clerk circulated paper copies of his advice (which was supplemental to the NALC legal advice). The Clerk read aloud his advice as follows:

1. *The Council would be very unwise to apply the new 5-year rule (adopted on 25 September 2019) to have the effect of excluding any organisation which received a solar farm grant from ALCC prior to 25 September 2019.*

2. *Doing so may lead to Judicial Review from an organisation so affected. This is a significant risk to the public purse.*
3. *The Council can amend or clarify its criteria without rescinding the previous decisions to adopt those criteria (on 25 September 2019).*
4. *The Council would be wise to clarify at this meeting that the new 5-year rule applies from the 2019 round of funding (i.e. from the date on which solar farm grants are awarded in December 2019).*
5. *No group should have been told not to apply. If they read the criteria and decided for themselves not to apply (e.g. because their project does not meet other criteria), this was a choice for them to make.*
6. *The 5-year rule allows for exceptional circumstances, so every group should have an opportunity to apply and to demonstrate if they have exceptional circumstances, and for the Council to consider those circumstances.*
7. *Two groups were told by a councillor that they could not apply.*
8. *They may take legal action against the councillor concerned or against the Council if they are not now given an opportunity to apply.*
9. *They should therefore now be given the opportunity to apply.*
10. *If any other group did not apply, because of an incorrect interpretation of the new 5-year rule, they should also now have the opportunity to apply.*
11. *That opportunity should be equal to the opportunity given to other groups in the past (e.g. a two-week deadline).*
12. *The Council should therefore re-advertise (on 19 November 2019) the opportunity to apply, in the same way as it did previously, via its website and via councillors going to speak to groups. Monday 2 December (applications to councillors) and Tuesday 3 December (applications from councillors to the Clerk) could be the relevant deadlines.*
13. *The Council should consider all applications on their merits, against the criteria it has adopted.*
14. *There is insufficient time for the Solar Farm Grant Working Group to consider the applications first and this would be duplicated effort.*
15. *The Council could if it wishes meet on Tuesday 10 December 2019 (earliest) (assumes papers go out on Wednesday 4 December 2019) to consider the applications and decide which organisation(s) should receive a grant. Does it want to allow for presentations? If so, how long for each?*
16. *Deciding on 10 December will theoretically give time to forward the Council's chosen project(s) to the solar farm company, to obtain their approval to allocating the funding to ALCC, to grant for those project(s), before the Christmas break.*

The Council considered the following issues in the order shown below.

### **5-year rule**

The following is a summary of the main questions (Qs) asked by councillors and answers (A) given by the Clerk:

- Q: What if a group did not apply in October (because they understood the 5-year rule to mean that they could not apply, because they had received a grant within the last 5 years), then the Council decided in November to apply the 5-year rule from 2019, and that group realised months later (that they could have applied after all)? Might

they then claim against the Council for changing the rules?

A: Clarifying that the new rule starts in 2019, when it was adopted, and re-advertising to enable other groups to apply within a further two weeks (i.e. the same length of time other groups had been given already) was the most reasonable approach and the least likely to be challenged (as everyone would then know what the rule meant and everyone would have had an equal opportunity to apply for a grant). This was not about changing the rules; it was about the Council clarifying the start date of the new 5-year rule, as different people had different interpretations of the new rule.

Q: Why was this issue being discussed again? The new criteria had been adopted in September and should not be changed now.

A: This issue was on the agenda again as Council had not made any decisions about allocating solar farm grants yet, time was running out, and Council had asked at its last meeting for legal advice on the 5-year rule. That advice had now been received and was being reported back, as Council had requested.

Q: Was it proposed that Council “go back on” the September decisions?

A: No. This was only about clarifying or changing criterion 17 (the new 5-year rule) and adapting the decision-making process and timescales, to reflect any changes agreed by Council and take account of the delays which had already occurred.

Various members commented (on both sides of the debate):

- the new 5-year rule was adopted in September 2019
- Council made a mistake in not being clear at the time about the start date
- the new 5-year rule could only be applicable from when it was adopted
- applying it to exclude organisations who received grants in 2017 was unfair
- the safest way was to apply the rule from when solar farm grants started in 2017
- several people had read it that way already, including a recent complainant and some potential applicants
- Councillor Oakley stated that he had told two groups not to apply, because of the 5-year rule
- it did not seem fair that (hypothetically) a group which received a grant 4.5 years ago could not have a grant until another 6 months had passed
- the 5-year rule had been adopted and it allowed for exceptional circumstances
- all groups should have been encouraged to apply
- the Council was not breaking any laws by applying the new rule to past years
- one group had already received a solar farm grant in 2017 and 2018
- this proved that the Council never intended to backdate the new 5-year rule
- the Clerk had advised Council correctly
- the legal advice received showed that the Clerk’s advice was correct
- there should not be a 5-year rule at all; this limited the choices available
- previous decisions should not be rescinded
- applications could be considered under the “exceptional circumstances” clause, even if the 5-year rule was backdated
- solar farm grants were for “legacy” projects; they were exceptional by nature
- the 5-year rule had been intended to ensure the 5 wards had a fair annual share
- all 8 applications received to date could be considered, even with the 5-year rule
- the email from Councillor Morgan dated 14 October 2019 had caused this problem
- the Council could not agree rules and then change them halfway through the process; this was like changing the rules during a game of football, when your side



was losing

- the new rule had to be applied consistently from when it was adopted, not before.

Councillor Dyson moved: that Council abide by the Clerk's advice and stages 1 to 16 above be adopted.

Councillor Phillips moved an amendment: that the Council stick to the original wording of the 5-year rule, apply it from when solar farm grants started in 2017 and consider the 8 applications already received, without re-advertising.

The Clerk sought clarity on the meaning of the amendment, which Councillor Phillips gave. The Clerk asked Councillor Phillips and others if they understood the risks of challenge which he had outlined and which the legal advice from NALC referred to.

Councillor Phillips and other members confirmed that they did understand the risks.

Councillor Simmons moved a further amendment: that the Council review the 5-year rule next year, after the first year of operation.

The Chair put the first amendment (from Councillor Phillips) to the vote.

With 9 members voting in favour:

**Council RESOLVED:**

- (1) that the Council stick to the original wording of the 5-year rule, apply it from when solar farm grants started in 2017 and consider the 8 applications already received, without re-advertising.

8 Councillors (Michaela Assiratti, Keri Bidgood, Gill Clark, Roger Clark, Tracey Dyson, Julie Holt, Beverley Lucas and Tracy Postlethwaite) asked for their votes against the amendment to be recorded.

The Chair asked the Clerk if members would be covered by the Council's indemnity insurance if they failed to follow the Clerk's advice and the external legal advice received. The Clerk stated that he did not have the wording of the insurance policy in front of him. However, he and the Deputy Clerk reminded members that they had been advised by One Voice Wales during training previously that, if they failed to follow officer advice or legal advice, they were unlikely to be covered by the Council's indemnity insurance.

Various members commented further (on both sides of the debate):

- applying the 5-year rule now and excluding historical grant recipients, then reviewing that decision again next year (and possibly re-allowing them) made no sense at all
- this would make the problem worse, not better
- the legal advice said whatever Council wanted it to say
- it said the Council could do whatever it wanted to do
- the Council did not have to give grants; it was a discretion to do so, or not.

Councillor Simmons withdrew his earlier amendment.

## **Special Motion to Rescind Council Decisions 77 (3) and (4)**

The Clerk answered questions from various members:

- as he had advised already; the 8 applications would have to come to the full Council for final decisions to be made, as the working group could not have decision-making powers delegated to it
- having the applications considered twice (by the Solar Farm Grant Working Group (SFGWG) and then the Council) was not necessary
- Council had decided that the SFGWG should consider the applications first
- decisions 77 (3) and (4) would need to be rescinded, if that was not going to happen
- taking the grant applications to the working group and then to the Council would be a duplication of effort and time
- time was short, as the solar farm company had set a 15 December deadline
- Councillors Adamson, Gill Clark, Dyson, Lucas, Rees and Morgan had supported various of the applications for solar farm grants this year
- Councillors Adamson, Gill Clark, Morgan, Oakley and Phillips were on the SFGWG
- some members of the working group may choose to declare interests and leave the meeting room, reducing the number of members left to consider the applications
- this could be a problem, with only 5 people on the working group
- it would be less of a problem at full Council, which consisted of 18 members.

Various members commented (on both sides of the debate):

- only (up to) 4 applications would need to come to the full Council
- working groups were designed to reduce the workload of Council meetings
- the working group could shortlist, removing "options" before the Council meeting
- this was not public money, so members would not have to declare interests
- if a councillor brought in an application from a community group, this did not mean the councillor supported the application or had a personal interest in it
- the criteria adopted by the Council on 25 September made clear that an application could only be submitted if it had the prior support of the councillor who submitted it; this implied they would have a personal interest and had pre-determined it
- the working group would not make the final decisions, so members would not have to declare interests at the working group
- submitting an application on behalf of an organisation was not the same as being a member of that organisation
- this was a "perversion" of the Member Code of Conduct
- many people were members of a Facebook group; did this constitute a personal interest?
- no; thousands of people could like or join a Facebook group, but not be a member of the organisation which was responsible for that Facebook group
- a member need not be a member of a community group, but could nevertheless be biased to approve their application over others and therefore should leave the room
- just because a councillor was not a member of an applying organisation, did not mean they need not declare a personal interest
- the key test was "how would the public perceive it"?

- if the public perceived that a councillor was biased, due to their connections with a community group, then that councillor should declare a prejudicial interest and leave
- a councillor only needed to declare an interest if they were a member or an officer of a particular body; not a supporter (of a football club for example)
- councillors had declared interests and left the room in similar circumstances in the past
- all applications could go to the Council, with the working group's recommendations
- organisations applying for grants may struggle to attend daytime meetings, to present their case.

The Clerk emphasised several times during the debate that councillors were responsible for deciding if they had personal interests. They were also responsible for declaring them. He could not tell members what to do. Members were responsible under the Member Code of Conduct and were accountable for their actions, including to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales. Members would be wise to err on the side of caution. Statements that councillors did not have an interest because the solar farm funding was not "public money" or because the SFGWG was "only a working group" were not correct. The Code of Conduct was clear; members had to declare interests if they existed, whenever they were meeting to conduct Council business. The solar farm funding was being given to ALCC, for ALCC to give to community groups, so this was Council business, and members should declare personal interests, if they felt they had personal interests.

The special motion which had been submitted by Councillors Assiratti, Bidgood, Roger Clark, Dyson, Holt and Lucas: "that we reverse the decisions 77 (3) and (4) made in September 2019, for the solar farm application" was moved and put to the vote.

With 8 members voting in favour and 9 against, the motion was declared lost.

### **Grant applications – decision making process**

The Clerk explained that, as Council had now decided not to re-advertise for applications from other organisations, and not to rescind the previous decisions, there was time for the SFGWG to meet to consider the 8 applications already received, before those applications were submitted to the Council (with the working group's recommendations). A meeting of the working group could take place on the same day as the Council meeting, if members wished, or earlier. He had spoken to the Project Manager at the solar farm company today and they would be willing to extend the 15 December deadline, as long as funds were issued by 20 December 2019. Further to questions posed by the Clerk about the process:

### **Council RESOLVED that:**

- (2) the Solar Farm Grant Working Group meet on 4 December at 6pm
- (3) applicants be invited to present their applications at the working group meeting, for up to 15 minutes each per applicant
- (4) the Council does not require presentations on the applications
- (5) the Council considers the 8 applications already received (along with the working group's recommendations) on 11 December 2019
- (6) other agenda items for Council on 11 December be kept to a minimum.

Various members commented that:

- they were “disgusted” that the majority of councillors had gone against the Clerk’s advice
- officers advised members, to protect members and prevent bad decisions
- the One Voice Wales training was very clear; councillors should not make decisions which were against officer advice.

Councillors Michaela Assiratti, Keri Bidgood, Tracey Dyson and Beverley Lucas asked for their names to be recorded as the members who expressed the above views.

The meeting ended at 8.20pm.

Signed as a correct record by the Chair .....

*NB these minutes are a summary of the proceedings and record of the decisions taken. They are not intended to be a verbatim record.*

*Minutes produced by Richard Gwinnell, Town Clerk*

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF ABERTILLERY AND LLANHILLETH COMMUNITY COUNCIL  
(ALCC) HELD ON 20 NOVEMBER 2019 at 7.00pm  
in the Council Chamber, Mitre Street, Abertillery**

**PRESENT: Councillors:**

Gill Clark (Chair), Peter Adamson, Michaela Assiratti, Keri Bidgood, Roger Clark, Tracey Dyson, Julie Holt, Mark Lewis, Beverley Lucas, Perry Morgan, Gary Oakley, Rob Phillips, Tracy Postlethwaite, Allen Rees, Nick Simmons, Glyn Smith and Graham White

**Officers:** Richard Gwinnell, Town Clerk and Steve Edwards, Deputy Clerk

**Others:** None

**ABSENT:** Councillor Bernard Wall

**119. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND WELCOMES**

No apologies for absence were received.

**120. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No members declared any personal interests verbally at the meeting. Councillor Phillips completed a personal interests form, that he had a personal but not prejudicial interest in agenda item 6 (minute 124 below) as he had awarded ward grants to Abertillery and District Museum in the past, he had been invited to their meetings and he had been a close supporter of the Museum (but he did not hold any position of authority on the Museum Trust).

**121. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

There were no public questions for this meeting.

**122. COUNCILLOR VACANCIES**

The Clerk reported that two applications for co-option into the vacant Abertillery seat had been received, from Vanessa Bartlett (on 8 November 2019) and from Rachael Baskerville (on 13 November 2019). He circulated both applications for members to read.

**Council RESOLVED** (with 12 votes in favour) to co-opt Vanessa Bartlett onto the Council as a Councillor for the Abertillery ward.

**123. FINANCE ORDER**

The Deputy Clerk outlined the finance order and answered questions about the gazebos damaged at Party in the Park 2019 (which the Council's insurance did not cover) and the bank transfers (between the Current and Reserve accounts) previously agreed by Council, which would be done as soon as staff had time to go to the bank.

**Council RESOLVED:**

- (1) to note the payments listed in Table 1 and Table 2 of the finance order
- (2) to authorise the payments listed in Table 3 of the finance order
- (3) to note the current financial position on the current and reserve accounts.

**124. QUARTER 2 BUDGET MONITORING REPORT AND END OF YEAR FORECAST**

The Deputy Clerk outlined the report. He stated that the Finance and Grants Committee would in future receive and discuss quarterly budget monitoring reports, before they were submitted to the Council, as they had with this report. He responded to a question about a British Gas bill (the Council was in credit).

Councillor Oakley (Chair of the Finance and Grants Committee) commented that:

- the committee met on 14 November
- it agreed to ask the Council to delegate decisions on ward grants to the committee in future (the Clerk advised that this could be dealt with later in the meeting, under “committee terms of reference”)
- the committee was putting together the draft budget for 2020/21, for submission to Council in January
- all members were invited to submit ideas for the new budget to the Clerk before the committee’s next meeting (2 December 2019)
- discussion had ensued at the committee meeting about a budget for potentially seeking a Community Asset Transfer of the Division Street car park next year
- members of the committee considered that a public survey should be carried out, to ask the public for their views, before any budget was committed to this
- it had been suggested that the Shop Local Working Group could take the lead on such a survey, as they were already looking at car parking options
- he had prepared a survey (copies of which were circulated at the meeting)
- the survey could be conducted at Winterfest on 30 November 2019 and beyond
- all members could help with the survey.

Various other members commented (main points):

- officers were doing a very good job; budgetary control was “spot on”
- copies of the survey could be taken to shops
- shops could be asked to get customers to do the survey too
- copies could also be taken to The Met, hairdressers, Bethany Chapel etc
- members would need to take responsibility for distributing and returning surveys
- staff could not be asked to do any more than they were doing already
- surveys could be taken to all shops in Abertillery and conducted at Winterfest
- there should also be an online link to the survey so people could find it online, fill it in and return it directly.

Following clarification, the Clerk stated that the survey could be posted on the website and 400 paper copies could be given to the Chair of the Shop Local Working Group next week.

**Council RESOLVED:**

- (1) to note the current financial position
- (2) that the Shop Local Working Group and all other members undertake the proposed car parking survey at Winterfest and beyond, with copies placed in local shops and other outlets in and around Abertillery town centre
- (3) that the survey be posted on the Council's website
- (4) that paper copies be produced and given to members as necessary.

**125. MOTION: COUNCIL GRANTS FUNDING**

Councillor Gary Oakley explained and moved his motion, as attached to the agenda.

Comments were made by various members (main points) that:

- since the Council adopted a £500 limit in its new grants criteria, groups were now increasingly applying for £500 (not lesser amounts)
- £10,000 would not last long if Council approved £500 grants every time
- this was about increasing the grants budget, not deciding to give £500 every time
- Council did not have to give every applicant £500
- there was a projected £3k underspend on the Council's budget overall
- voluntary groups kept communities going and needed ALCC's support
- the grants budget and any underspend could be looked at again later in the year.

**Council RESOLVED:** that the Council increases the 2019/20 Council Grants budget from £5,600.00 to £10,000.00 and that the additional funds required are taken from the "new projects" budget.

**126. GRANT APPLICATIONS**

The Clerk reported on a conversation with Rev Viv Nicholls of the Zion Miner's Chapel Intergenerational Craft Group and the reason for their application (following this question being raised at the Finance and Grants Committee on 14 November 2019). The Deputy Clerk answered questions about the amount of grants given previously to this group.

Comments were made that the Zion Miner's Chapel's Equalities Policy did not make any reference to sexual orientation. Members reassured the questioner that the group was fully inclusive and that it had customers with a wide variety of characteristics. It was suggested that this gap in their policy should be drawn to their attention.

**Council RESOLVED:**

- (1) That Zion Miner's Chapel Intergenerational Craft Group be granted £500 towards the costs of food, art and craft materials
- (2) That the ward grant application from Councillor Gill Clark, for £50, for the Llanhilleth Tenants and Residents Association to spend on road signage, be approved
- (3) That the ward grant application from Councillor Bidgood, for £50, for the Llanhilleth Tenants and Residents Association to spend on road signage, be approved

- (4) That the ward grant application from Councillor Rees, for £50, for the Llanhilleth Tenants and Residents Association to spend on road signage, be approved
- (5) That the ward grant application from Councillor Lucas, for £50, for the Friends of Six Bells Park to pay for the rental of an indoor space to hold a fundraising event, be approved
- (6) That the Friends of St Illtyd be granted £500, for the first stage of a project to make a photographic record of all the gravestones in the churchyard and produce a website, 3D map and database, to enable people to find out about their ancestors, long after the gravestones themselves have deteriorated beyond eligibility.

## **127. SOLAR FARM GRANT 2019**

The Clerk informed members that he had spoken to the Project Manager of the solar farm company on Monday. He read out an email received today, in which the Project Manager confirmed that, if the Council decided on 11 December (who to give the 2019 funds to) and informed the company, for their approval, and the funds were issued before 20 December 2019, this timescale would be acceptable. The company was likely to approve the Council's choice, if it was clear, exactly what the funds would be spent on.

The Clerk asked to speak to members of the Solar Farm Grant Working Group after this meeting, to agree the timeline for the working group meeting on 4 December 2019.

The Chair stated that all members were invited to attend the working group meeting on 4 December, as presentations made by applicants on that date would not be repeated at the Council meeting on 11 December 2019.

**Council RESOLVED:** to note the update.

## **128. CHRISTMAS 2019**

Councillor Phillips updated the Council on the preparations for Winterfest and what the day would entail. It was reported by Councillor Holt that the Facebook post (advertising Winterfest) had been seen by 21,500 people, with 900+ interested in attending.

Councillor Phillips reminded members that volunteers were needed to help on the day.

**Council RESOLVED:** to note the update.

## **129. REPORTS BACK AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM WORKING GROUPS**

**Leisure and Tourism Working Group (L&TWG):** Councillor Dyson (Chair of the L&TWG) reported that a meeting had been held recently and progress was being made on the Fun Run. Councillor Postlethwaite was also looking into a "Green Shoots" project, which could involve local volunteers in the "town in bloom" project (planting and watering flower beds). Further details were to follow on costs. This was for Council's information at this stage.

**Shop Local Working Group (SLWG):** Councillor Lewis (Chair of the SLWG) referred to the recommendations circulated with the agenda and sought Council's approval of £200 to purchase and paint a sleigh, to be sited in the town centre and moved around (by members of the SLWG) during the Christmas period. The idea was for children to sit on the sleigh



and have their photo taken. He also referred to the proposed Best Dressed Window Competition, which would be free to the Council as trophies had been donated by New Ashes. He asked for three volunteers to judge the competition.

**Wellbeing Working Group (WBWG):** Councillor Simmons (Chair of the WBWG) reported that no costings had been received for projects, except the Town in Bloom project. He would submit Town in Bloom costings (based on a quotation he had received) for inclusion in the 2020/21 budget. The project mapping exercise undertaken by Councillor Holt was a good start to mapping what the Council was doing in terms of meeting the Wales wellbeing objectives.

**Council RESOLVED:**

- (1) to note the updates
- (2) to agree to the spending of £200 to purchase and paint the proposed sleigh
- (3) that the members of the SLWG judge the Best Dressed Window Competition.

The Chair suggested and Council agreed to take agenda item 13 at this point.

**130. PROJECT MAPPING EXERCISE**

Councillor Holt outlined the project map template she had prepared, which was attached to the agenda. She commented that ALCC should not be focussing its efforts on looking for numerous new projects to meet the wellbeing objectives, but rather it should be mapping what it was already doing (e.g. on youth engagement) to meet the wellbeing objectives. When ALCC was asked what it was doing to improve wellbeing, it could use these maps to demonstrate that. The template could also be used to map other things ALCC was doing (e.g. the fun run or giving grants to community groups) to improve wellbeing.

The Chair of the WBWG reminded members that ALCC now had a budget of over £200k and would therefore have to report what it was doing to meet the wellbeing objectives in future years. He welcomed the template, agreed to call a meeting of the WBWG to develop it further and agreed to work with Councillor Holt on preparing more project maps.

**Council RESOLVED:**

- (1) to note and support the project mapping template
- (2) to note and support the further development of this by the WBWG.

Council returned to agenda item 11 at this point.

**131. REPORTS BACK AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM WORKING GROUPS**

**Youth Engagement Working Group (YEWG):** Councillor Oakley (Chair of the YEWG) circulated a recent email from PC Evans of Heddlu Gwent Police which referred to the reduction in calls about anti-social behaviour by youths in August, the increase in anti-social behaviour by youths in Abertillery since the detached youth workers stopped duties at the end of September, the positive impact of the detached youth workers (paid for by ALCC), the need for more permanent solutions and the need for a "safe space". He stated that:

- the Blaenau Gwent Youth Service was currently interviewing for additional youth workers following ALCC's decisions on 30 October 2019
- a further meeting to review the effectiveness of the additional youth workers paid for by ALCC would be held on 5 December and the results reported back to Council
- Councillor Rees had given a talk on fishing at Cwmtillery Lakes
- the Youth Service and Space Café had reported that some youths may be interested in taking up fishing
- a Christmas Fayre was being held at Abertillery Youth Centre on 28 November: this had been shared on the Council's Facebook page and by email
- it may be a good idea to include more money in the budget in future to pay towards the costs of a new "safe space" for young people
- the YEWG would consider this in due course.

**Council RESOLVED:** to note the update.

## **132. COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS**

Members proposed changes to committee and working group memberships. It was pointed out that councillors should be asked if they wanted to serve on working groups, before being appointed to do so in their absence.

Councillor Oakley reminded members that the Finance and Grants Committee had agreed to ask the Council to delegate decision making on ward grants to the committee in future. Discussion ensued on whether to grant permission to approve and refuse ward grants to the committee and on potential members' personal interests. The Clerk read aloud the changes which would be needed to the committee's terms of reference.

**Council RESOLVED:**

- (1) to appoint Councillor Vanessa Bartlett to the Planning and Environment Committee
- (2) to appoint Councillor Michaela Assiratti to the Shop Local Working Group
- (3) to grant delegated authority to the Finance and Grants Committee to approve (but not to refuse) ward grants
- (4) if the committee is minded in future to refuse a ward grant application, the application be referred to the Council for decision
- (5) that the terms of reference of the Finance and Grants Committee be amended as follows:
  - Replace: "The Council itself takes all decisions relating to the approval of spending or grants."
  - With: "The Council itself takes all decisions relating to the approval of spending or grants (except ward grants, which the Committee may approve (but not refuse))."
  - Replace: "The Finance and Grants Committee's purpose is to prepare, monitor, review and assist in the effective financial management of the Council. Its role is to make recommendations to the Council in any of the matters listed below:"
  - With: "The Finance and Grants Committee's purpose is to consider and approve (but not refuse) ward grant applications and to prepare, monitor, review and assist in the effective financial management of the Council. Its role is to make recommendations to the Council in any of the matters listed below:"

- Replace: “6. To consider and make recommendations to the Council in respect of all requests for financial assistance submitted to the Council, including Council Grants and Ward Grants.”
- With: “6. To consider and make recommendations to the Council in respect of all requests for financial assistance submitted to the Council, excluding solar farm grants and ward grants (which the Committee may approve but may not refuse).”

### **133. REPORTS BACK ON RELEVANT TRAINING OR MEETINGS ATTENDED**

Councillor Adamson reported on a recent meeting of the Blaenau Gwent Heritage Forum (BGHF), the successful heritage day held recently in Brynmawr and the BGHF website if anyone wanted to seek further information.

The Chair referred to the recent One Voice Wales (OVW) training on Local Government Finance, which ten members had attended and which had been very interesting. Two other members were due to attend the next session, on 26 November.

Councillor Postlethwaite referred to the recent OVW training session she had attended on the Member Code of Conduct, which had been very useful.

Councillor Lucas referred to the recent OVW training session she and two other members had attended on “The Councillor” which had been very good.

**Council RESOLVED:** to note the reports back.

### **134. CHAIR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS, RELEVANT CORRESPONDENCE AND CELEBRATING SUCCESS**

The Chair and other members commented:

- thanking members for their efforts with poppies and the Remembrance Day parades
- the tributes had been very fitting
- thanking the Abertillery Knit and Natter Group for their hard work over many weeks, organising and making the poppy cascade which was placed near the Silent Soldier
- the poppy cascade had attracted a great deal of positive publicity for Abertillery
- it had been said that it was the best of all the Remembrance displays seen locally
- Abertillery Youth Drama and Music Society (AYDMS) should be thanked for stepping in at the last minute to provide music for the Abertillery Remembrance service
- a local young man had been selected recently for the Wales Under 13s football team
- further details would be supplied to the Clerk in due course.

**Council RESOLVED:**

- (1) to write with the Council’s thanks and/or congratulations to the Abertillery Knit and Natter Group, AYDMS and the local young man who had been selected for the Wales Under 13s football team
- (2) to publicise these successes on the Council’s website and Facebook page.

A councillor asked why he was no longer receiving agenda packs for meetings at his home, three clear days before meetings. Another councillor reminded members of the Council's previous decisions to issue agendas by email only (not by post) and cut down on paper.

The Clerk explained that summons and agendas were being sent to councillors' homes at least three clear days before meetings, in line with the legislation (which he outlined), except where members did not want these posted to their homes, as agreed by the Council. Whole agenda packs were emailed to all members, posted on the website and available in paper form, before or at meetings. Posting whole packs involved extra resources and costs. When post was received at councillors' homes was not within ALCC's control.

The Chair stated that this matter should be dealt with outside the meeting.

The meeting ended at 8.35pm.

Signed as a correct record by the Chair .....

*NB these minutes are a summary of the proceedings and record of the decisions taken. They are not intended to be a verbatim record.*

*Minutes produced by Richard Gwinnell, Town Clerk*

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF ABERTILLERY AND LLANHILLETH COMMUNITY COUNCIL  
(ALCC) HELD ON 11 DECEMBER 2019 at 7.00pm  
in the Council Chamber, Mitre Street, Abertillery**

**PRESENT: Councillors:**

Gill Clark (Chair), Peter Adamson, Michaela Assiratti, Vanessa Bartlett, Keri Bidgood, Roger Clark, Tracey Dyson, Julie Holt, Beverley Lucas, Perry Morgan, Gary Oakley, Rob Phillips, Tracy Postlethwaite, Allen Rees, Nick Simmons, Bernard Wall and Graham White

**Officers:** Richard Gwinnell, Town Clerk

**Others:** 5 members of the public (reps of organisations applying for solar farm grants)

**ABSENT:** Councillors Mark Lewis and Glyn Smith

**148. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND WELCOMES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mark Lewis and Glyn Smith.

**Council RESOLVED** that staff send a "get well" card to Glyn Smith on ALCC's behalf.

Welcomes were extended to Councillor Vanessa Bartlett (to her first meeting) and to the members of the public.

The Chair referred to a complaint received from a councillor that, as some councillors spoke to others (whilst other people were already speaking) and some councillors spoke over others, this made it very difficult for other people to hear what was happening, especially if they had hearing difficulties. Councillor Lucas expanded on the problems she experienced.

The Chair asked all members to speak one at a time, not interrupt others, and speak loudly enough for everyone else to hear.

Members agreed to use the microphone system from now on, as that may help.

**149. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No members declared any personal interests.

**150. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

There were no public questions for this meeting.

Agenda item 4 (finance order) was deferred to later in the meeting, as the public had come to hear the solar farm grants debate.

## 151. SOLAR FARM GRANT 2019

The Clerk outlined the process to date, reminding members of the 10 October deadline for applications, the meetings held and the decisions made already about solar farm grants 2019. He referred to the documents circulated to all members already by email and paper copies made available at this meeting of the seven applications, the criteria adopted by the Council and the notes of the Solar Farm Grant Working Group (SFGWG) held on 4 December 2019.

The Chair read out the notes and recommendations of the SFGWG held on 4 December 2019. She referred to each application, whether it met the Council's grant criteria, and the SFGWG recommendation on each. She ended with the Roseheyworth and Bournville Community Woodlands Association (R&BCWA) application, as the SFGWG had recommended that they be granted the entire £35,000 available this year.

Comments were made and questions were asked by various members (main points):

- had R&BCWA got permission to undertake their project; it was not their land?
- had detailed costings been received from R&BCWA as their application did not contain any specifics?
- Councillor Morgan stated that he had sent (yesterday) detailed costings supplied by R&BCWA and initial expressions of support for their project from Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council (BGCBC) to the Clerk and to the members of the SFGWG
- details and costings should have been received by the 10 October deadline; they were not admissible at this late stage as that would give R&BCWA an advantage over others
- the SFGWG asked on 4 December for the detailed costings and BGCBC position
- did Councillor Morgan go back to other applicants and ask them for more details?
- Councillor Morgan referred to R&BCWA as "we"; did he have a personal interest?

Councillor Morgan replied that he did not have a personal interest in the R&BCWA; the R&BCWA used Bournville Community Hall (BCH) for their meetings and he (Councillor Morgan) was Chairman of BCH. He had asked R&BCWA for the further details and they had supplied them.

The Clerk was asked to circulate copies of the further details received from Councillor Morgan on the afternoon of 10 December. He did so. The Chair gave members a few minutes to read the documents. She also read out parts of the documents as some people were unable to read them due to the size of the print.

The Chair asked Council if they wished to accept the further details at this stage of the process, given that criterion number 8 was clear that all details must be provided with the application form, by 10 October 2019.

Council agreed to take the further details received from R&BCWA (via Councillor Morgan) into account.

Further comments were made and questions asked by various members (main points):

- other applicants did not supply all the required details either (e.g. Swffryd Community Centre) and they and several others had received solar farm grants within the last five

- years, so did not meet criterion 17
- the R&BCWA project fitted best with the project aims and objectives signed up to by the Council previously (when Dr David Llewellyn presented to the Council last year)
- last year, the whole £35,000 had gone to projects in Cwmtillery
- the same area should not get all the funding again as other areas were missing out
- the R&BCWA scheme built on the Cwmtillery scheme supported last year
- it took many years of investment to make a real difference in an area
- BGCBC had provided initial support but not formal agreement to the R&BCWA project (on BGCBC land)
- were the woodlands going to be asset transferred or formally leased to R&BCWA?
- these processes took years sometimes to agree and sign off
- the £35,000 had to be spent; not left in a bank account awaiting BGCBC permission
- R&BCWA did not want to community asset transfer (CAT) the land; they wanted better access to the woodlands
- R&BCWA needed to go through the proper processes; BGCBC officers employed to improve access to the countryside were bound to say they supported the project, but this did not constitute formal landowner's permission
- £150,000 had been granted to improve the woodlands several years ago; a lot of work was done to improve access and BGCBC maintained it for some years
- two years ago, CANCO had indicated that no one was maintaining it
- who was going to maintain the woodlands in future?
- BGCBC did not have the funds to do so; they had higher priorities for limited funds
- the woodlands had not been maintained; they had been left to become a jungle
- the solar farm grant funding should go elsewhere this year
- Dr Llewellyn had advised ALCC; the big vision was to create a country park, linking up different areas of the valley, creating a lasting and sustainable legacy, involving local volunteers, well-being, tourism, employment, training and many other aspects
- the R&BCWA scheme built on the Cwmtillery project last year and ticked all the boxes
- Cwmtillery Lakes were also in BGCBC's ownership; this was no different
- of all the applications, only one met the criteria properly; the R&BCWA project
- it was about creating an outdoor classroom, education, schools, recruiting volunteers to maintain it, teaching new skills, improving natural and pond habitats, engaging local communities and sustainability
- the woodlands had been badly neglected for many years; how was ALCC to know this would not happen again and the solar farm grant money would be wasted?
- the Leader of BGCBC had indicated their support for Six Bells Park last year
- the Leader of BGCBC had indicated that BGCBC would remain responsible for the maintenance of any land or assets not transferred to community groups
- other organisations (e.g. the Abertillery Workmen's Institute) worked very hard to raise funds themselves; they did not simply rely on grants for all their income
- had R&BCWA raised any funds themselves to pay towards their project?
- had R&BCWA applied (or did they intend to) for a CAT or lease of the land?
- could these questions be asked in writing before any decisions were made?

The Clerk reminded members that the solar farm company had set a deadline of 15 December (and extended that to 20 December only) to issue the funds. If they were not issued by then, the company had indicated that they would withdraw the funds. There was therefore no time left to enter into written correspondence with applicants, questioning their projects. Representatives of some groups were however present today if Council wanted

to ask them questions and they wished to respond.

Caroline Mundy of the R&BCWA stated that she was happy to answer questions if she could. She was asked:

- had R&BCWA raised any other funds already?
- was R&BCWA planning to apply for a CAT of the land from BGCBC?

Caroline Mundy responded on behalf of R&BCWA:

- R&BCWA had only approx. £800 in the bank
- it was a very newly formed organisation
- it had been formed when people heard about the solar farm grant, through CANCO
- it had applied for three other grants from other organisations already
- it hoped to match fund any grants
- it was focussed on getting funds to improve access to the woodlands
- she took groups of children to the woods and was very passionate about improving access to the woodlands now and for years to come
- R&BCWA had no plans to apply for a CAT or lease of the land
- £35,000 was a "drop in the ocean"
- R&BCWA's priority was to see how much could be done with this money.

Further comments were made and questions asked by various members (main points):

- if the woodlands were not transferred to R&BCWA, BGCBC would remain responsible for the upkeep of the woodlands
- giving £35,000 to R&BCWA would therefore simply reduce BGCBC's liability
- BGCBC did not have any money spare to spend on maintaining the woodlands
- this was wild land, not a park or sports ground, which may benefit from a CAT
- woodlands were different from parks and needed special consideration
- the Cwmtillery project land was also owned by BGCBC; were the same questions asked last year?
- the funds last year had gone to Abertillery Excelsiors AFC; they already owned their land following a CAT and maintained it on behalf of BGCBC; they also had an established long-standing relationship with BGCBC
- the pond at the R&BCWA site was unsafe for children
- the woodlands were owned by BGCBC; so was Six Bells Park
- the paths at Six Bells Park were unsafe too; why should they be treated differently?
- the £35,000 had been given to 30 groups in 2017
- the £35,000 had been given to only one group in 2018
- what would happen if the funds were not transferred next week?

The Clerk reminded members of the solar farm company's deadline (20 December). The company had said they would withdraw the funds from ALCC and employ a company to administer the funds instead, if ALCC did not make the necessary decisions in time.

Further comments were made and questions asked by various members (main points):

- could ALCC not share out the funds to each applicant?



- some applicants had received grants previously so could not get grants again
- the new “5 year rule” was only adopted in September; members had agreed therefore to consider each application under the “exceptional circumstances” clause
- the SFGWG turned down three applicants under the 5-year rule as they did not show exceptional circumstances
- the solar farm company had said they wanted more groups to benefit, not fewer
- applicants did not know when they applied that the 5-year rule may be backdated
- he (Councillor Oakley) had told two groups not to apply due to the 5-year rule; that rule therefore had to be honoured
- until the applications were considered by the SFGWG, there was no way of knowing if they had any exceptional circumstances
- Six Bells Park (SBP) received £2,000 in 2017 and had raised £4,000 in match funding; why were other groups not also obliged to raise other funds?
- £2,000 had been given to SBP by the local tenants and residents association
- in principle, the woodlands project was good; however it was not acceptable for the same area to receive £70,000 in two years and other areas to get nothing
- the SFGWG decided which applications met the criteria and which did not
- the SFGWG made recommendations; Council did not have to agree with the SFGWG
- this was £35,000 for this year only; another £35,000 would be available next year
- this money may not be available at all next year
- improving the natural environment was very important; but so was improving the social and economic environment; the criteria were not just about green spaces
- R&BCWA did not meet the criteria either; they did not give specific costings by the advertised deadline
- there was no certainty what the solar farm company would do if ALCC agreed to give the whole £35,000 to the R&BCWA project; as R&BCWA did not have control of the woodlands and did not have detailed costings.

The Clerk stated in answer to questions that he was not able to answer detailed questions about the land ownership issue. The company had said they required details of exactly what the money would be spent on. The details supplied by applicants would be sent to the solar farm company (whichever applicant(s) ALCC agreed to fund). It would be for the solar farm company to decide (as it was their money) if they agreed to the funding going to the organisation(s) concerned.

Further comments were made by various members:

- BGCBC had already indicated their support for the R&BCWA project
- an indication of support was not formal permission.

A motion was moved by Councillor Oakley: *that the £35,000 2019 solar farm grant be given to Roseheyworth and Bournville Community Woodlands Association.*

The motion was seconded by Councillor White.

An amendment was moved by Councillor Postlethwaite: *that the £35,000 2019 solar farm grant be shared equally amongst all seven applicants.*

The amendment was seconded by Councillor Dyson.

The Chair put the amendment to the vote. With 9 members voting in favour and 8 against, the amendment was declared carried.

**Council RESOLVED:** that the £35,000 2019 solar farm grant fund be shared equally amongst all seven applicants.

Councillors Peter Adamson, Perry Morgan, Gary Oakley, Robert Phillips, Allen Rees, Nick Simmons, Bernard Wall and Graham White asked for their votes against to be recorded.

Members of the public left the room at this point and Council adjourned for a few minutes.

Further comments were made and questions were asked by various other members:

- if ALCC did not decide today, it would be too late; the money would disappear
- how would it be decided what £5,000 would be spent on by each group, given that they had all applied for more than that?

The Clerk responded:

- all seven applications would be sent to the solar farm company tomorrow
- each group would get £5,000 if the solar farm company agreed all the projects
- it would be for the groups to accept £5,000 and prioritise what to spend that on
- it would be up to the solar farm company whether it agreed to ALCC giving £5,000 each to seven groups
- this did not fully meet the criteria (e.g. the minimum of £10,000) but the Council had decided nevertheless to split the funds equally.

Councillor Oakley stated that:

- it should be noted that members may have taken an illegal vote, as they had not applied the grants criteria correctly
- Brynithel Community Centre had been told they could not apply
- the Council was at risk of judicial review and other legal action if it took this decision, as it had prevented some groups from applying (if they had received solar farm grants previously) and they may sue
- the previous decision to adopt the criteria could not be reversed within six months, without being formally rescinded.

Councillors Morgan and White added to Councillor Oakley's comments.

The Clerk responded that:

- the criteria had not been changed and no decisions were being rescinded
- the NALC legal advice (received in November) said that ALCC could decide that its criteria meant whatever ALCC wanted them to mean
- ALCC had not told anyone that they could not apply
- ALCC could not be held liable for telling people not to apply, as ALCC had not told anyone not to apply

- Councillor Oakley had told groups not to apply (and he had announced that at an earlier Council meeting); he may therefore have put himself at risk of action
- anyone could decide to take legal action against anyone else; it would be for the defendant to defend their own actions and the courts to decide the outcome
- the Council decided on 18 November to backdate the new 5-year rule and not to re-advertise (allowing other groups to apply); those decisions risked action
- it took those decisions, on a vote of 9 members to 8, even though he (the Clerk) had advised members of the risks those decisions involved
- ALCC could change its criteria if it wished to, but it had not done that
- ALCC had not decided to give the funds to anyone until today, so there was no previous decision to rescind.

The Chair stated that the decision had already been taken. Council needed to move on.

Council returned to agenda item 4 (finance order) at this point.

## **152. FINANCE ORDER**

The Clerk responded to questions on staff salary payments, insurance, the gazebos broken at Party in the Park, banking of allotments income, the printer lease and progress with electronic banking.

### **Council RESOLVED:**

- (1) to note the payments listed in Table 2 of the finance order
- (2) to authorise the payments listed in Table 3 of the finance order
- (3) to note the financial position on the current and reserve accounts.

## **153. CHRISTMAS 2019**

Councillor Phillips reported on the very successful Winterfest event held on 30 November 2019, the lessons learnt (e.g. the need for an external power source at the Museum) and the “stunning” Christmas lights provided this year in Abertillery and surrounds under the new contract with Centregreat (who had worked very well to overcome the many problems they had encountered with old power supplies, old timing systems and so on).

The Clerk read an email from Centregreat. They had been unable to source the additional 100m of coloured lights ordered in November for the trees outside Bournville Community Hall but could supply 50m of white and 50m of coloured lights if needed. They had also said the cost of the electricity to run 100m of lights outside the Community Hall for the weeks remaining of Christmas lighting would be approx. £20.

Councillor Morgan informed Council that there was no need for the Council to provide lights in those trees as the Community Hall had its own lights in those trees and was ordering an additional 300m of lights. There was also no need for a donation from the Council to the Community Hall for the costs of the electric as the cost was minimal. The Community Hall would instead provide its own lights and ask ALCC for a grant in future years (as other areas had received grants for their Christmas lights).

Questions were asked about why there were no lights in Somerset Street (beyond the King Street junction) this year, where the stars provided there previously had gone, who had provided lights there in the past and whether the lights intended for Bournville could be placed at Somerset Street (beyond the King Street junction) instead. A question was also asked about where the lights provided at Bournville approximately 15 years ago had gone.

Councillor Phillips (Chair of the Christmas Lights Working Group) explained that:

- decisions had been made over many years to put lights in different places
- ALCC wanted to rotate lights and “share out” lighting to a wider area in recent years, whilst still focussing most of the lights and spending on Abertillery town centre
- this was why ALCC was now providing lights for the first time in Cwmtillery and Aberbeeg for example
- ALCC had to cut down in other areas, as it did not have a limitless pot of money
- many years ago, the former Town Centre Manager had purchased the blue stars for Somerset Street (beyond King Street) and installed them there
- that had only lasted one year, after which ALCC ended up paying for them by default when Abertillery no longer had a Town Centre Manager (as the funding ceased)
- the working group had proposed this year (and Council had decided) a fairer share of lights, including stopping the Somerset Street lights at the King Street junction
- ALCC did its best but it was not possible to keep everyone happy all of the time
- as in many other examples, ALCC ended up footing the bill when others withdrew
- ALCC had a contract, agreed in June; it was not possible to decide in mid-December to put lights up in new places, where they had not been ordered to date
- ALCC had over many years ended up with numerous lighting features, stored at the factory unit in Cwmtillery, many of which were not working and were obsolete
- ALCC decided some years ago to dispose of all the old lights and Commercial Christmas (ALCC’s former contractor) took them away for disposal
- it was impossible to say where the original blue stars had gone
- Centregreat (ALCC’s new contractors) were using what was left of ALCC’s stock, as well as new stock (which they supplied as part of the new contract).

The Chair reminded members of the Charity Carol Concert being held on Sunday 22 December 2019 and asked for volunteers to help on the night, selling programmes, as stewards etc. 8 members volunteered.

**Council RESOLVED:**

- (1) to note the updates
- (2) to inform Centregreat that the Council does not require the lights (ordered in November) in the trees outside Bournville Community Hall after all this year
- (3) to consider next year, if requested, whether to make a grant towards the costs of the Christmas lights in Bournville, provided by the Community Hall.

**154. REPORTS BACK AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEES**

**Human Resources (HR) Committee:** Councillor Gill Clark (Chair of the HR Committee) reported that a meeting had been held on 29 November 2019 and the committee had:

- agreed the Christmas shut down dates (24 December at noon to 2 January) in line with what Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council was doing
- agreed the staff appraisals and that performance was satisfactory
- agreed that ALCC wants to be the best it can be, so needs the best training for staff including CILCA in light of the general power of competence coming down the line
- agreed that the amount of staff training provided was insufficient due partly to the lack of time and asked officers to look into future training options and report back to the HR Committee in January
- agreed that the staff job descriptions were out of date and needed review, as did the staff job evaluations and the number and hours of staff
- agreed to ask One Voice Wales to assist the HR Committee in January in a review of the JDs, JE and staff hours/numbers (depending what OVW was going to charge)
- agreed to hold special meetings in January to consider the OVW costs and start work on the JD/JE/staffing review.

The Chair reported that the HR Committee would report back to Council with the costs as soon as possible.

**Finance and Grants (F&G) Committee:** Councillor Oakley (Chair of the F&G Committee) reported that a meeting had been held on 2 December 2019 and the committee:

- discussed the budget at length and explored all budget lines in depth
- would discuss the budget further on 13 January and make recommendations to budget Council in January
- agreed that a buzzer was needed in the Council Chamber for people who arrived late at meetings and could not get in
- recommended Council to pay for that now (the quote received from the existing supplier was £225 + VAT)
- discussed IT/TV etc upgrades and would discuss this further as part of the budget build in January
- agreed to ask members for further breakdowns of their proposed budget additions as soon as possible
- discussed the Financial Services Compensation Scheme £85,000 limit and whether ALCC should have different banks
- asked officers to report back on banking options and
- agreed to write to members with a ward grants deadline (of 10 January 2020).

Councillor Oakley stated that:

- ALCC should get on with setting up accounts with different banks and moving ALCC's funds quickly, as there was another financial disaster looming
- specialist expertise may be needed to review the Council's IT and data storage systems, to comply with relevant laws
- there were a number of other areas where financial management at ALCC needed to be improved, as he and two other councillors had discovered at a recent One Voice Wales advanced finance training event
- these would be discussed further by the F&G Committee in due course.

**Council RESOLVED:**

- (1) to note the updates
- (2) to agree to the spending of £225 + VAT to purchase and install a buzzer in the Council Chamber, to alert Council if someone arrives late for a meeting and cannot get in.

**155. REPORTS BACK AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM WORKING GROUPS**

**Leisure and Tourism Working Group (L&TWG):** No update was given.

**Shop Local Working Group (SLWG):** No update was given. A question was asked about the sleigh and reindeer purchased recently and whether they were covered by the Council's insurance. The Clerk stated that they were not currently covered but further discussions were taking place with the insurance company on this matter. In the meantime, ALCC could not take risks with public safety or take the risk of being prosecuted for failing to provide safe facilities. This was an example of laudable actions being taken in a hurry, but not being carried through properly.

**Wellbeing Working Group (WBWG):** Councillor Simmons (Chair of the WBWG) reported that he would arrange a WBWG meeting in the new year.

**Youth Engagement Working Group (YEWG):** Councillor Oakley (Chair of the YEWG) reported that Blaenau Gwent Youth Services were still in the process of recruiting additional youth workers but progress was frustratingly slow. More details were awaited on the costs of the additional youth workers in the year ahead. More also needed to be done to progress the "safe space" which young people's representatives had asked for. In answer to questions, Councillor Oakley stated that he and the Chair of the Council had attended a meeting of the BG Youth Forum and that anyone else's help on these issues was welcome.

**Council RESOLVED** to note the updates.

**156. SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER 3(x)**

**Council RESOLVED** to suspend standing order 3(x) to extend the time limit for the meeting beyond the normal two hours.

Councillor Phillips left the meeting at this point.

**157. HONORARIUMS FOR SERVICES RENDERED**

The Clerk reported that the Council had paid £40 in previous years to Ian Bradley, who drove the vehicle which towed Santa's Sleigh at Winterfest. It had also paid £75 in previous years to Sharon Mason, the Mitre Street building caretaker, at this time of year.

Members suggested that the amount for Sharon Mason be reviewed upwards next year.

**Council RESOLVED:**

- (1) to pay an honorarium of £40 to Ian Bradley for his Winterfest services in 2019
- (2) to pay an honorarium of £75 to Sharon Mason for her caretaker services in 2019

(3) to review, upwards, the amount paid to Sharon Mason next year.

#### **158. WAR MEMORIAL MAINTENANCE CONTRACT**

The Clerk informed Council that:

- the War Memorial maintenance contract was expiring shortly
- tenders had been sought for the contract for the next three years (with an option to extend for a further two years beyond that, if performance was satisfactory)
- only one tender had been received, from Green Fingers, which was the existing contractor and had performed very well over the last two years
- Green Fingers had quoted exactly the same price in 2020 as it had charged in 2019, for the same work
- £100 had been added to the quote for Autumn daffodil bulb planting if required
- £15 per visit was charged for watering the site in very dry weather.

Comments were made by various members (main points) that:

- litter was picked from the bank opposite the site by an ALCC councillor
- Green Fingers did an excellent job of maintaining the War Memorial site
- ALCC should ask Green Fingers to maintain the Silent Soldier site as well
- Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council (BGCBC) owned and maintained the Silent Soldier site, but not always to a high standard
- BGCBC would cut it back and tidy the Silent Soldier site if and when requested
- further clarity was needed on who owned the War Memorial site.

The Clerk reported that ALCC was responsible for the War Memorial but not the Silent Soldier site. Further work would be needed in relation to the Silent Soldier site, if Council required, as it was BGCBC owned and maintained. The Silent Soldier site could not simply be added to the existing contract and a new tendering process may be required.

#### **Council RESOLVED:**

- (1) that the contract to maintain the War Memorial site be awarded to Green Fingers for the year ahead, on the terms in the tender submitted
- (2) that the contract be awarded for only one year
- (3) that further work be undertaken in the year ahead, on whether the Silent Soldier site can also be included in the contract if appropriate
- (4) that officers report back on who owns and is responsible for the War Memorial site.

#### **159. REPORTS BACK ON RELEVANT TRAINING OR MEETINGS ATTENDED**

Councillor Simmons stated that he and two other members had attended Advanced Local Government Finance training recently and that all members of the Finance and Grants Committee (and all other members of the Council) should attend.

#### **160. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS, RELEVANT CORRESPONDENCE AND CELEBRATING SUCCESS**

Following comments from Councillor Roger Clark:

**Council RESOLVED:**

- (1) to write with the Council's congratulations to Abertillery Bluebirds AFC for their recent performance in the Welsh Cup and
- (2) to publicise their successes on the Council's website and Facebook page.

The Chair extended season's greetings to everyone and closed the meeting at 9.20pm.

Signed as a correct record by the Chair .....

*NB these minutes are a summary of the proceedings and record of the decisions taken. They are not intended to be a verbatim record.*

*Minutes produced by Richard Gwinnell, Town Clerk*



**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GRANTS COMMITTEE OF ABERTILLERY  
AND LLANHILLETH COMMUNITY COUNCIL (ALCC) HELD ON 14 NOVEMBER 2019 at  
8.40pm in the Council Chamber, Mitre Street, Abertillery**

**PRESENT: Councillors:**

Gill Clark, Perry Morgan, Gary Oakley (Chair) (in the Chair), Allen Rees and Nick Simmons

**Officers:** Richard Gwinnell, Town Clerk and Steve Edwards, Deputy Clerk

**Others:** None

**ABSENT:** Councillor Glyn Smith

**109. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND WELCOMES**

No apologies were received.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the new committee and emphasised the importance of all members gaining a thorough understanding of the budget and the budget process. There was a good deal of work to be done, to ensure this. The draft budget could be discussed by this committee three times before the January precept deadline.

**110. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No members declared any personal interests.

**111. TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Debate ensued on the committee's powers to decide grants and whether, if grants then had to go to the Council (after this committee) for approval, that would cause duplicated effort and excessive delays. Members reached a consensus that ward grants should be the responsibility of this committee, but not council grants and not solar farm grants. There would be a time delay in approving grants if meetings were held quarterly (which had been agreed) but applicants would need to get used to submitting grant applications on time.

**The Committee RESOLVED:**

- (1) To note its terms of reference, as decided by the Council.
- (2) To recommend to the Council that the Committee is delegated the authority to decide ward grant applications, without reference to the Council, in future.
- (3) To recommend to the Council that it replaces line 1 of the Committee's existing terms of reference with: "The Council itself takes all decisions relating to the approval of spending or grants (except ward grants)." NB underlined words are new words.
- (4) To recommend to the Council that it replaces paragraph 2 of the Committee's existing terms of reference with: "The Finance and Grants Committee's purpose is to consider and determine ward grant applications and to prepare, monitor, review and assist in the effective financial management of the Council. Its role is to make recommendations to the Council in any of the matters listed below." NB underlined words are new words.

- (5) To recommend to the Council that it replaces section 6 of the existing terms of reference with: "To consider and make recommendations to the Council in respect of all requests for financial assistance submitted to the Council (but not solar farm grants and not ward grants)."
- NB underlined words are new words.

The Chair changed the agenda order, with the agreement of the Committee.

## **112. GRANT APPLICATIONS**

Each application was considered separately and **the Committee RESOLVED:**

- (1) That Zion Miner's Chapel Intergenerational Craft Group be asked for more information on what the requested £500 council grant would be spent on, as this was not made clear in their application form
- (2) That the Council be recommended to approve the ward grant application from Councillor Gill Clark, for £50, for the Llanhilleth Tenants and Residents Association to spend on road signage
- (3) That the Council be recommended to approve the ward grant application from Councillor Bidgood, for £50, for the Llanhilleth Tenants and Residents Association to spend on road signage
- (4) That the Council be recommended to approve the ward grant application from Councillor Rees, for £50, for the Llanhilleth Tenants and Residents Association to spend on road signage
- (5) That the Council be recommended to approve the ward grant application from Councillor Lucas, for £50, for the Friends of Six Bells Park to pay for the rental of an indoor space to hold a fundraising event
- (6) That the Council be recommended to approve the council grant application from the Friends of St Illtyd, for £500, for the first stage of a project to make a photographic record of all the gravestones in the churchyard and produce a website, 3D map and database, to enable people to find out about their ancestors, long after the gravestones themselves have deteriorated beyond eligibility.

The Chair undertook to verbally report the Committee's conclusions at the Council meeting on 20 November 2019.

## **113. QUARTER 2 BUDGET MONITORING REPORT AND END OF YEAR FORECAST**

The Chair reiterated the importance of all members understanding what was in the budget at the start of the financial year, what had happened since and what was left in the budget. He reminded members that the Council had increased its budget to £234,000 in 2019/20, with £98,000 not allocated to specific projects at the start of the year, but many decisions had been taken since then, to allocate funds to specific projects. He was of the view that the Council should not go into another year without specific spending proposals for its whole budget.

Discussion ensued and questions were answered by officers on the level of reserves (held in the Reserve Account), the level of underspend carried forward from previous years (held in the Current Account), expected underspends this year (e.g. on pension contributions, training and members allowances) and what (and when) should be moved from the Current to the Reserve Account. The Chair informed members that he would be proposing an

increase in the council grants budget at the next Council meeting, to maximise spend in that area whilst also preventing an overspend on this budget line and minimise any underspends overall.

Comments were made by other members, including that:

- the Council's officers deserved a great deal of praise for managing within budget and keeping costs down (e.g. by closing the office on days when evening Council meetings were held to minimise overtime)
- officers were providing "brilliant" service with no additional staff costs
- more money would need to be put in the youth budget line for more youth workers next year
- reports back were needed first, to ensure the money put in to date was effective
- councillors should be asked to submit their ideas for next year, to add to the budget suggested by officers (of £196k)
- the public should be asked what they wanted, before any extra spending was agreed on their behalf
- a survey could be drawn up for example to find out whether people wanted ALCC to spend money to take over the main car park in Abertillery
- there was no realistic chance of Blaenau Gwent allowing ALCC to take over the car park and keep it open at night, so a survey would falsely raise people's expectations
- taking over the car park may be an option in future, given the worsening situation with car parking availability since Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council took over parking enforcement and started issuing parking tickets
- members could survey people at Winterfest, where many people would be gathered
- members were at liberty to draw up a draft survey if they wished.

The Clerk and the Deputy Clerk stated that:

- a survey should be agreed ideally at a Council meeting, if it was to be conducted on behalf of ALCC (as opposed to being conducted by individuals)
- this should be proposed by members to the Council on 20 November if members wanted a survey done urgently (e.g. at Winterfest)
- an amount could be built into the 2020/21 budget whilst the Council explored the feasibility of taking over the car park, if Council wished to do that
- if the funds were not used during the year, they could be kept in earmarked reserves for this longer term purpose, if Council so agreed
- all members should be asked if they wished to add to the 2020/21 budget as soon as possible.

The Chair agreed to draft a survey, for proposal to the Council on 20 November 2019, and to ask members at that meeting to submit their budget ideas before the committee's next meeting.

**The Committee RESOLVED:** to note the Quarter 2 budget monitoring report and end of year forecast.

**114. DRAFT BUDGET 2020/21**

Discussion ensued on the draft budget prepared by officers and attached to the agenda. Members were of the view generally that any further increase should be kept to inflation only.

**The Committee RESOLVED:** to note the draft budget circulated pending further discussion at the next meeting.

**115. DATES AND TIMES OF MEETINGS**

**The Committee RESOLVED:**

- (1) That meetings of the committee be held on the following dates (all at 7pm) to discuss the following issues:
- Monday 2 December 2019: draft budget and precept 2020/21
  - Monday 13 January 2020: grants and draft budget and precept 2020/21
  - Tuesday 10 March 2020: grants (prior to year-end)
  - Thursday 23 April 2020: grants, end of year out-turn and audit plan
  - Thursday 11 June 2020: grants, draft Annual Return and Internal Auditor's report (assuming the Council establishes the Committee again next year).
- (2) That the Clerk circulate the dates agreed to members of the committee by email.

The meeting ended at 10.20pm.

Signed as a correct record by the Chair .....

*NB these minutes are a summary of the proceedings and record of the decisions taken. They are not intended to be a verbatim record.*

*Minutes produced by Richard Gwinnell, Town Clerk*

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GRANTS COMMITTEE OF ABERTILLERY  
AND LLANHILLETH COMMUNITY COUNCIL (ALCC) HELD ON 2 DECEMBER 2019 at  
7.00pm in the Council Chamber, Mitre Street, Abertillery**

**PRESENT: Councillors:**

Gary Oakley (Chair), Gill Clark, Perry Morgan, Allen Rees and Nick Simmons

**Officers:** Richard Gwinnell, Town Clerk and Steve Edwards, Deputy Clerk

**Others:** None

**ABSENT:** Councillor Glyn Smith

**142. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND WELCOMES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Glyn Smith.

**143. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No members declared any personal interests.

**144. MINUTES – FINANCE AND GRANTS COMMITTEE – 14 NOVEMBER 2019**

**The Committee RESOLVED** to confirm the minutes of the Finance and Grants Committee meeting held on 14 November 2019 as a correct record, for signature by the Chair.

**145. DRAFT BUDGET 2020/21**

The Deputy Clerk circulated A3 copies of the draft budget (attached to the agenda).

Lengthy debate ensued, with questions asked and answered about what the existing budget paid for and opinions expressed about whether specific budget lines should be increased, decreased or removed altogether. Discussion also took place on the need for a facility in the Council Chamber to alert Council if someone arrived late for a meeting and could not get into the building.

Debate took place specifically on the costs of, the components of, and whether the budget was adequate for:

- SLCC membership for staff
- staff training and conferences
- member training
- the proposed IT upgrade, projector and data storage solutions
- the smart screen for the Council Chamber (which had been proposed previously and should be listed as a separate budget line)
- insurance (which should include gazebos in future)
- One Voice Wales membership
- printer rental (the costs would change due to the current lease ending soon)

- Internal Auditor fees: the Internal Auditor visited 11 times last year
- ward grants (and the process of agreeing them)
- the need to provide £1,500 (not £800) in future for a Chair's Allowance in line with the decisions of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) for Wales
- Christmas lights
- the proposed Town in Bloom project (and the need for Council to agree what was required i.e. a specification before proper quotes could be obtained).

**The Committee RESOLVED:**

- (1) to obtain a quotation for a facility in the Council Chamber, to alert Council if someone arrived late for a meeting and could not get in, and propose this spending to Council
- (2) to seek further details and breakdowns of potential costs of new projects from members who had suggested additions to the budget
- (3) to consider the budget further at its 13 January meeting and
- (4) to write to all members, with a deadline of 10 January 2020 for them to submit ward grant applications (so the committee could consider these on 13 January 2020).

**146. FINANCIAL SERVICES COMPENSATION SCHEME (FSCS)**

The Chair explained that, if a bank went bust, individual people (and community councils with a budget of less than 500,000 Euros) were protected, insofar as they would be compensated if they lost up to £85,000 of their investment with that bank. The FSCS and Government advised organisations against "putting all their eggs in one basket" and it appeared another financial storm may be brewing in the USA. He stated that ALCC should therefore look to split its funds between different banks, to minimise any potential losses (if a bank or banks collapsed) and should therefore look to open new bank accounts, with different banks, as soon as possible.

The Deputy Clerk reported that bank collapse was a financial risk, given that ALCC may have in excess of £300k in the bank following receipt of its annual precept (taking reserves into account). Staff were looking at electronic banking options for the future, to enable funds to be moved between accounts much more quickly and easily. Additionally, BGCBC had been asked if they could pay the annual precept to ALCC in quarterly instalments in future (rather than in one lump sum) to try and ensure a more regular stream of funds and minimise the risk outlined. A reply was awaited. It may be advisable for ALCC to hold its funds in separate banks in future (e.g. one for the current account, one for working reserves and another for earmarked reserves). This would help mitigate the risk.

**The Committee RESOLVED:** that the Deputy Clerk report back to the committee as soon as possible with further details and options, to enable the committee to review the position and make recommendations in due course to the Council.

**147. DATES AND TIMES OF MEETINGS**

**The Committee RESOLVED:** to note the dates and times of meetings already agreed and not make any changes.

The meeting ended at 8.45pm.

Signed as a correct record by the Chair .....

*NB these minutes are a summary of the proceedings and record of the decisions taken. They are not intended to be a verbatim record.*

*Minutes produced by Richard Gwinnell, Town Clerk*





**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES (HR) COMMITTEE OF  
ABERTILLERY AND LLANHILLETH COMMUNITY COUNCIL (ALCC) HELD ON 29  
NOVEMBER 2019 at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Mitre Street, Abertillery**

**PRESENT: Councillors:**

Gill Clark (Chair), Tracey Dyson, Rob Phillips and Allen Rees

**Officers:** Richard Gwinnell, Town Clerk and Steve Edwards, Deputy Clerk

**Others:** None

**ABSENT:** Councillor Julie Holt

**135. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND WELCOMES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Julie Holt.

**136. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No members declared any personal interests.

**137. RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**The Committee RESOLVED** to exclude the press and public from the meeting for the following items of business, by virtue of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, on the grounds that disclosure of the matters to be discussed would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of those matters.

**138. CHRISTMAS SHUTDOWN DATES**

**The Committee RESOLVED** to replicate the arrangements of Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council and close the Community Council office from Tuesday 24 December 2019 at 12.00 noon until Thursday 2 January 2020 at 9am.

**139. ANNUAL STAFF APPRAISAL**

The Clerk circulated copies of the appraisals of the Clerk (conducted by the Chair of the Council and HR Committee) and the Deputy Clerk (conducted by the Clerk). The committee spent a few minutes reading the staff appraisals.

The Clerk explained that he and the Deputy Clerk had potential personal interests in the outcomes of their appraisals as their terms of conditions of work (e.g. pay) may be affected. The officers offered to leave the room whilst the committee undertook their deliberations. The committee asked officers to stay in the meeting.

Members discussed:

- the lack of hours available for staff to do everything required by the Council
- the inadequacy of training (quantity and quality) provided for staff in the past
- the need to look for alternative, more in depth, training options for staff as the training provided by One Voice Wales was aimed at councillors and was too basic for staff
- the need for the Council to have the best possible training for staff, including CILCA (the recognised qualification for Clerks and likely standard if the General Power of Competence (GPOC) is introduced in Wales in future)
- the lack of time available for staff to undertake training, given current working hours.

**The Committee RESOLVED:**

- (1) that the appraisals are approved
- (2) that staff performance has been satisfactory
- (3) that staff training has been inadequate in the past (quantity and quality)
- (4) that ALCC wants to be the best it can be, so needs the best training for staff, including CILCA, especially in light of the potential GPOC
- (5) that staff report back to the committee on other training options, costs and potential time commitments, including external training (e.g. the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC), Blaenau Gwent CBC who provide staff training for CBC staff) and CILCA.

#### **140. ANNUAL REVIEW OF STAFFING AND PAY STRUCTURE**

The Clerk reminded members that the HR Committee was responsible for an annual review of staffing and pay structure, in line with its terms of reference. He circulated copies of the current national pay structure and explained where he and the Deputy Clerk were positioned in terms of their contracted pay scales.

The Clerk and Deputy Clerk explained that they had potential personal interests in the outcomes of any review as it may affect their terms of conditions of work (e.g. pay or hours). They offered to leave the room whilst the committee undertook their deliberations. The committee asked officers to stay in the meeting, answer questions and hear the debate.

Members discussed:

- the hours of work of ALCC's two part time staff
- the public opening hours of the Council offices; whether office opening hours should be extended; and the very small number of public visitors to ALCC
- the need to have two staff in at the same time (not lone working at different times)
- the significant increase in the demands on ALCC staff since they started in late 2016 and early 2017 (and the almost trebling of ALCC's budget since 2016)
- whether staffing numbers and hours were sufficient going forward
- the extent to which the Council had moved forward since the current staff started
- the Council's ambitions for more projects, more initiatives and a higher precept
- the need to review the job descriptions and job evaluation for the roles, which were out of date
- whether staff hours should be increased or more people (including admin staff and agency staff for one-off projects) should be employed
- the need to include staffing costs as part of the costs of new projects in future.

The Clerk explained again that he and the Deputy Clerk would have personal interests in the outcomes of any review as it could affect their terms and conditions. Their involvement in any review would need to be very limited as a result. If the committee wished to explore other external HR advice options, One Voice Wales (OVW) provided HR consultancy services and would have more information (than was available internally or elsewhere) on the staffing and pay structures of town and community councils around Wales. The costs of any such external help would need to be agreed by the Council.

Members stated that staff would need to have some involvement (e.g. they would need to describe their roles and how their job descriptions might usefully be changed). They asked staff to seek further information from OVW on the costs and components of a potential HR review and report back to the committee as soon as possible.

**The Committee RESOLVED:**

- (1) that the staff job descriptions are out of date and need review, as do the job evaluations and the number of staff and hours of the existing staff
- (2) that members of the committee be provided with copies of the current staff job descriptions and the job evaluation scheme used in 2017
- (3) that staff be asked to input, on how the job descriptions needed to be updated (to reflect the roles as they existed now)
- (4) to ask OVW (depending on cost) to assist the HR Committee in the new year in a review of the staff job descriptions, job evaluations and staff hours/numbers and
- (5) that special meeting(s) of the committee be held in January 2020 to consider the OVW response and next steps and potentially start work on the JD/JE/staffing review.

**141. OTHER MATTERS AFFECTING STAFF**

The Clerk referred to the lack of overtime paid to officers since early 2017 and the need for an overtime policy, to determine when overtime should be paid (as opposed to time off in lieu being taken). A policy had been in place in 2016 (for previous staff) but that had been forgotten and needed to be revisited.

The Deputy Clerk informed members that he was no longer the Clerk of Crickhowell.

The Clerk informed members that he was no longer undertaking acting agency work.

**The Committee RESOLVED:**

- (1) to note the updates
- (2) that the previous overtime policy be provided to members
- (3) that the committee review the overtime policy in January 2020.

The meeting ended at 11.45am.

Signed as a correct record by the Chair .....

*NB these minutes are a summary of the proceedings and record of the decisions taken. They are not intended to be a verbatim record.*

*Minutes produced by Richard Gwinnell, Town Clerk*



**THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL OF ABERTILLERY & LLANHILLETH**  
**CYNGOR CYMUNED ABERTYLERI A LLANHILLEDD**

7

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Abertyleri, Blaenau Gwent, NP13 1AE

**The accounts Listed hereunder are presented at the 22 January 2020 Council Meeting  
(Finance Order No 8 – December 2019 to January 2020)**

**Cheques that have been presented between 5<sup>th</sup> November 2019 to 3 January 2020**

**(Table 1)**

PAYEE	Date	Cheque No	Amount
The Glow Company - Lanterns for Christmas Parades	14/10/2019	7611	£526.27
Viking Payments Stationary	04/11/2019	7614	£282.36
Andrew Sheehy Green Fingers, Visit 16/10/19	04/11/2019	7616	£85.00
Andrew Sheey Green Fingers, Visit 25/9/19	04/11/2019	7619	£85.00
CF Corporate Leasing of Printer 1/12/19 to 29/2/20	04/11/2019	7618	£302.89
Amazon Payments - A3 Laminator	04/11/2019	7615	£45.99
RBL, Poppy Appeal. 11 Wreathes (6 from ALCC, 5 for BGCBC) + 55 Lamppost poppies	04/11/2019	7623	£460.00
One Voice Wales - Code of Conduct Training (Edwards/Lucas/Postlethwite)	04/11/2019	7617	£120.00
AR Digital - September Printing	11/11/2019	7620	£58.74
BGCBC - 3 Months (Jul -Sep)		7624	£14,550.15
Nat West - Bank Charges	29/11/2019		£5.00
Andrew Davies - Shop Local Sleigh	22/11/2019	7625	£150.00
BT Group - Direct Debit (Phone/Internet)	06/12/2019	D/D	£61.60
Ffrindiau Tyleri - Replacement for broken gazebos	25/11/2019	7626	£649.95
One Voice Wales - CT/Devolution Training (Simmons/Oakley/Lewis)	25/11/2019	7627	£120.00
Viking Payments Stationary	25/11/2019	7628	£70.36
Vison ICT	25/11/2019	7632	£246.00
Friends of Six Bells Park - Bev Lucas Ward Grant	03/12/2019	7637	£50.00
Kris Jones - Re-printing of Defibrillator Leaflets	03/12/2019	7639	£350.00
A & S Animal Encounters	30/11/2019	7621	£350.00
Llanhilleth Tenants and Residents - Gill Clark Ward Grant	03/12/2019	7634	£50.00
Llanhilleth Tenants and Residents - Keri Bidgood Ward Grant	03/12/2019	7635	£50.00
Llanhilleth Tenants and Residents - Allen Rees Ward Grant	03/12/2019	7636	£50.00
Friends of St Illtyds	03/12/2019	7638	£500.00

AR Digital - October Printing	25/11/2019	7630	£46.71
Zion Miners Chapel	25/11/2019	7633	£500.00
AR Digital - November Printing	19/12/2019	7640	£155.51
Andrew Sheey Green Fingers, Visit 8/11/19	19/12/2019	7643	£200.00
Ian Bradley - Honorarium (Council Decision 11/12/19)	19/12/2019	7648	£40.00
Sharon Mason - Honorarium (Council Decision 11/12/19)	19/12/2019	7649	£75.00
Viking Payments Stationary	19/12/2019	7646	£77.56
Nat West - Bank Charges	31/12/2019		£7.00
<b>Total:</b>			<b>£20,321.09</b>

**Cheques that have been issued but not yet presented as at 3 January 2020  
(Table 2)**

<b>PAYEE</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Cheque No</b>	<b>Amount</b>
AYDMS – T Williams Ward Grant	Last Year	7464	£100
AYDMS – T Dyson Ward Grant	Last Year	7473	£50
AYDMS, Defibs Advert in program	29/08/2019	7595	£25.00
AYDMS - Party in the Park performance	29/08/2019	7596	£150.00
Abertillery Town Band - Council Grant	29/08/2019	7599	£500.00
Perry Morgan Members Allowance 2018/19 - Replacement Cheque	25/11/2019	7629	£150.00
One Voice Wales - The Councillor Training (Assiratti/Lucas/Postlethwite)		7641	£120.00
One Voice Wales - Charing Skills (Dyson)		7642	£40.00
A1 Jump & Bounce - Rodeo Reindeer at Winterfest		7644	£280.00
Fiona Angwin - Story Telling at Winterfest		7645	£115.00
Solar Farm Grant - Friends of Six Bells Park		7650	£5,000.00
Solar Farm Grant - Roseheyworth & Bounville Community Woodlands Association		7651	£5,000.00
Solar Farm Grant - Llanhilleth Miners Institute		7652	£5,000.00
Solar Farm Grant - Tyleryan Belles Sports Association		7653	£5,000.00
Solar Farm Grant - Abertillery Youth Drama and Musical Society		7654	£5,000.00
Solar Farm Grant - Abertillery Bowls Club		7655	£5,000.00
Solar Farm Grant - Swffryd Community Centre		7656	£5,000.00
Newport Leaflets Ltd - Distributon of Defibs Leaflets		7657	£495.00
SLCC - Deputy Clerks Annual Membership		7658	£175.00
Mrs Eryl Dykes - Rental Adam Street Allotments		7659	£532.40
Owl Sanctuary - Winterfest		7660	£265.00
AR Digital - December Printing		7661	£94.06
Pinkies Parties Ltd - Characters for Winterfest + 55 lamppost poppies		7662	£300.00
Mark Lewis - Paint and Brushes for Sleigh		7663	£45.91
Mark Lewis - White Spirit for Sleigh		7664	£1.80
ICO - Annual Charge		D/D	£40.00
<b>Total:</b>			<b>£38,479.17</b>

**Invoice received or expected or Council decisions made but payments not yet made.  
(Table 3)**

<b>PAYEE</b>	<b>Amount</b>
BGCBC (Payroll) - 3 Months Staff Costs – Oct to Dec 2019	14,550.15
Gwyn Palfrey – Application to Welsh Athletics Association for licence for 10k Run	50.00
Centregreat – Christmas Lights (Estimate)	16,545.60
BGCBC (Payroll) 3 Months Staff Costs – Jan – Mar 2020	14,550.15
Friends of St Illtyd – Clr G Oakley Ward Grant	200.00
Brynithel Community Centre – Clr M Assiratti Ward Grant	200.00
Llanhilleth Institute Luncheon Club – Clr G Clark Ward Grant	50.00
Llanhilleth Miners Luncheon Club – Clr K Bidgood Ward Grant	50.00
The Friendly Group, Sofrydd Community Centre – Clr A Rees Ward Grant	150.00
Hospice of the Valleys – Clr G White Ward Grant	200.00
Hospice of the Valleys – Clr B Wall – Ward Grant	200.00
<b>Total:</b>	<b>46,745.9</b>

**Grant Applications Received but not yet approved  
(Table 4)**

<b><u>Application</u></b>	<b><u>Date of Application</u></b>	<b><u>Amount</u></b>
MENASH (Mental Health Support Group) Ebenezer Chapel, Abertillery. Funding Request	26/11/19	500.00
Abertillery Museum – Clr T Postlethwaite Ward Grant	9/12/19	200.00
Abertillery Museum – Clr T Dyson Ward Grant	18/12/19	150.00
Abertillery Museum – Clr K Bidgood Ward Grant	18/12/19	100.00
Abertillery Museum – Clr G Clark Ward Grant	18/12/19	100.00
Ebbw Fach Choir – Clr B Lucas Ward Grant	16/12/19	150.00
Abertillery Bluebirds – Clr R Clark Ward Grant	7/1/20	200.00
<b>Total:</b>		<b>1400.00</b>

**Income  
(Table 5)**

Chairs Charity Carol Concert	604.60
<b>Total:</b>	<b>604.60</b>

**Monthly Finance Update – Current Account.**

Current Account Balance 3/01/20:	<b>£146,526.08</b>
Issued Cheques (Table 2):	<b>£38,479.17</b>
To be issued (Table 3):	<b>£46,745.90</b>
Grants, if approved (Table 4):	<b>£1,400.00</b>
Current Account Sub Total:	<b>£59,901.01</b>
 Income (Table 5)	 <b>£604.60</b>
 <b>Current Account Balance</b>	 <b>£60,505.61</b>

## **RESERVES**

Reserves currently stand at **£61.647.71**, of which **£5,000** is ring-fenced for external auditor costs for 2014/15 to 2018/19.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1. Council notes the payments in Tables 1 and 2.**
- 2. Council authorise the payments in Table 3 above.**
- 3. Council notes the financial position on the current and reserves accounts**





**Abertillery and Llanhilleth Community Council**

**Quarter Three - 2019/20**

**Budget Report**

**Authors: Richard Gwinnell (Clerk) and Steve Edwards  
(Deputy Clerk)**

**Date: 15 January 2020**

**For Council Meeting on 22 January 2020**

### Background:

It is part of good governance and reducing financial risks that Councillors who have the ultimate financial responsibility for the Community Council are kept informed on the budget situation.

One of the key elements of this is a report back from officers on how spending and income is performing against the budget that has been agreed. This is the third quarter budget report for 2019/20 and covers the nine months from April 2019 to December 2019 and forecast spend for the remaining year where that is known.

The Council agreed a budget at its 16 January 2019 meeting (**Annex 1**), which formed the basis of our precept request and the baseline numbers for comparisons in this budget report. We also came into the 2019/20 year in a healthy situation as far as finances are concerned with a Current Account balance more than £30k but reserves at only £16k.

### Report:

The Budget setting process for 2019/20 was followed but what is unusual was that the set budget included a large amount, £78,000, that was unallocated as New Projects, and £20,000 allocated for additional staff costs without that being quantified.

The overall spend for the first nine months of 2019/20 was **£172,907.41** against a budget of **£166,781.46**, so a **£6,125.95 overspend** for the first nine months of the year. **Please note** £20,000 (The additional staff costs which haven't materialised) have been moved to reserves.

All the factors that have gone into this are detailed in the attached spreadsheet (**Annex 2**). The current forecast is that for the full year the Council will spend **£219,784** against a budget of **£234,000**, so at this point in time there is a forecast underspend of **£14,215.27 for the full year** but this does include **£8,353.28** of unallocated New Project (which in theory could still be spent at a later date).

The main reasons for this are

- Staff costs are 4.1% under budgeted figure, mainly because no pension costs are being for the Deputy Clerk
- The forecast training costs for members and staff is significantly lower than expected.
- Internal Audit Costs were lower than estimated
- We will not pay Chairs Allowance which had been budgeted for
- There is an expectation that only 4 members will claim the members allowance.
- We are not expected to spend the £2,000 allocated for public toilets.

### Council Grants:

This was an area of concern when the half year forecast was produced, but Council grants have lessened since that time, and £4,400 was moved across from the New

Projects budget. So, Council Grants budget for the year is now £10,000. We are currently now showing a forecast spend of £5,808 for the full year for Council Grants, which will be an underspend of £4,192

### Additional Items:

We have paid for additional items detailed below which were not considered as part of the overall budget process in January.

Roman Builders - Removal of Christmas lights	£720.00
Romam Builders - Blue Plaque Install	£72.00
New Gazebos * 10	£1,299.00
New Tables * 10	£299.90
SWALEC Costs for Christmas Lights 2017 (previous Cheque lost)	£944.70
RBL Lamp post Poppies	£185.00
Sharon Mason - Honorarium (Council Decision 11/12/19)	£75.00
Perry Morgan Members Allowance 2018/19 - Replacement Cheque	£150.00
	<b>£3,745.60</b>

### New Projects:

There was an originally allocated budget of £78,600

We now have allocated spend of £65,846.91 which leaves a balance of £12,753.28 for new projects.

<b>NEW PROJECTS</b>	
Party in the Park	£11,355.45
Youth Engagement group	£38,551.46
Defibs project additional	£3,600.00
Defibs Publicity	£1,840.00
Drone Video	£1,000.00
Website review	£1,500.00
Additional Christmas lights Funding	£5,000.00
Ffindieu Tyleri	£2,000.00
Abertillery Rock and Blues	£1,000.00
<b>Balance of new projects</b>	<b>£65,846.91</b>

### Reserves:

Reserves now stand at £61,647.71 (£5,000 is ringfenced for external audit costs) during the year we transferred the £15,000 that was taken from Reserves in December 2018 to pay for the Defibrillator Project, the £20,000 unspent additional staff costs, the £1,300 unspent Panto Costs and £5,000 for previous years External Audit. We have also put £3,706.12 VAT reclaim direct into Reserves.

This means that unallocated reserves are £56,647.71, which is 24.2% of our overall budget, so we still slightly under the minimum recommendation of reserves being at least £58,500 (25%) of our yearly budget.

**Budget Status:**

Budget spend is broadly in line with the overall forecast for the full year, if all new project money is spent, so the budget status is Green, where there are no planned transfers of money from the reserves and no major overspending issues.

**The projected underspend is £5,861.99 (assuming that all of the New Project Money is spent), if the new project money is not spent then the underspend would be £14,215.27**

**Recommendations:**

1: Note the current position.

# Budget 2019/20 - Abertillery and Llanhilleth Community Council

Salaries: this assumes 1 part time (30 hours) Town Clerk and 1 part time (23 hours) Deputy Town Clerk									
Post	FTE (Full Time Equivalent)	Hourly rate	Weekly	Annual Actual	Employer NI Cont	Pension	Total Council Cost		
1 Town Clerk NJC Spine Point 35 (Spine Points have been consolidated)	£37,849.00	£19.62	£588.54	£30,604.22	3,060.84	£5,508.76	£39,173.82		
1 Deputy Town Clerk NJC Spine Point 23 (Spine Points have been consolidated)	£26,999.00	£13.99	£321.77	£16,732.04	1,147.19	£3,011.77	£20,891.00		
Additional Staff Costs for Projects							£20,000.00		
Totals				£47,336.26	£4,208.03	£8,520.53	£80,064.81		

Training and subscriptions		
2 Memberships of SLCC		£450.00
Training Budget for Officers Including Conference Attendance		£1,200.00
Training Budget for members		£2,000.00
Totals		£3,650.00

Administration		
IT for MS365 for two members of staff		£200.00
Bank Charges		£210.00
Insurance		£650.00
One Voice Wales Membership		£2,350.00

Ana 1



Printing and photocopying usage		£700.00
Printer Rental		£1,300.00
Internet and Phone (BT)		£250.00
Web Hosting - Vision ICT		£250.00
Stationary and Postage		£1,000.00
Accountants (payroll)		£600.00
Information Commissioner		£40.00
Electricity from British Gas		£0.00
Internal Audit		£1,500.00
Travel and Mileage		£500.00
External Audit		£5,000.00
Welsh Water		£150.00
Totals		<b>£14,700.00</b>

<b>Council and Ward Donations</b>		
£200 per Councillor - Ward Donations		£3,800.00
Chairmans Allowance		£800.00
Council Grants		£5,600.00
Members Allowance (19*£150)		£2,850.00
		<b>£13,050.00</b>
<b>Environment and Lesiure all items</b>		
Xmas lights		£20,000.00
WinterFest		£2,000.00
Panto		£1,300.00
Contribution to Toilets		£2,000.00
Allotments		£510.00
War Memorial Maintenance		£1,500.00
Wreaths		£125.00





SWALEC Costs for Christmas lights		£1,500.00
Replenish Reserves - Defibrillator		£15,000.00
Project Costs		£43,935.00
Totals		

New Projects		£78,600.19
		£78,600.19

Overall Total

£234,000.00



**Abertillery and Llanhilleth Community Council - Budget Spend 2019/20**

**Report of Quarter Three - April - December 2019 by Steve Edwards**

Expenditure	Agreed Budget for 2019/20	Budget for first three quarters	Actual for first three quarters	Variance £	Variance %	Projected to Year End £	Variance £	Variance %	Notes
Budget Item									
Clerk Salary (Gross)	£30,604.22	£22,953.17							
Deputy Clerk Salary (Gross)	£16,732.04	£12,549.03							
Salary Gross (Both Officers)	£47,336.26	£35,502.20	£35,930.34	£428.15	1.21	£47,907.12	£570.86	1.21	Small Variance as slight miscalculation on pro-rata rates
Pension	£8,520.53	£6,390.40	£4,142.70	£2,247.70	-35.17	£5,523.60	£2,996.93	-35.17	Deputy Clerk does not take up pension
Employer NIC	£4,208.03	£3,156.02	£3,127.23	£28.79	-0.91	£4,169.64	£38.39	-0.91	
<b>Staffing Costs Totals</b>	<b>£80,064.82</b>	<b>£45,048.62</b>	<b>£43,200.27</b>	<b>£1,848.34</b>	<b>-4.10</b>	<b>£57,600.36</b>	<b>£2,464.46</b>	<b>-4.10</b>	
2 * Memberships of SLCC	£450.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	0.00	£395.00	£55.00	-12.22	SLCC Costs have increased, actual figures not known when budget set.
Training Budget for Officers	£1,200.00	£900.00	£144.00	£756.00	-84.00	£144.00	£1,056.00	-88.00	No further expected Officer Training Costs
Training Budget for Members	£2,000.00	£1,500.00	£1,000.00	£500.00	-33.33	£1,333.33	£666.67	-33.33	
<b>Training and Subscriptions</b>	<b>£3,650.00</b>	<b>£912.50</b>	<b>£1,144.00</b>	<b>£231.50</b>	<b>25.37</b>	<b>£4,576.00</b>	<b>£926.00</b>	<b>25.37</b>	
Microsoft Office, 2 Licences	£200.00	£200.00	£226.22	£26.22	13.11	£226.22	£26.22	13.11	This is the last year of yearly costs have we have purchased ongoing licences
Bank Charges	£210.00	£157.50	£117.64	£39.86	-25.31	£156.85	£53.15	-25.31	
Insurance	£650.00	£650.00	£760.24	£110.24	16.96	£760.24	£110.24	16.96	Council resolved at Meeting of 26/6/19 to go forward with renewal quote from Zurich. This also includes the premium for the Party in the Park event
Membership of One Voice Wales	£2,350.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	0.00	£2,350.00	£0.00	0.00	These costs are due to be paid in Q4
Printing and photocopying usage	£700.00	£525.00	£618.84	£93.84	17.87	£825.12	£125.12	17.87	Printing has been higher than usual, because of the large numbers of papers and associated documents for meetings.
Printer Rental	£1,300.00	£975.00	£956.67	£18.33	-1.88	£1,275.56	£24.44	-1.88	
BT (Internet and Phone)	£250.00	£187.50	£191.63	£4.13	2.20	£255.51	£5.51	2.20	Now on Direct Debit
Web Hosting - Vision ICT	£250.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	0.00	£245.00	£4.00	-1.60	
Stationary and Postage	£1,000.00	£750.00	£624.09	£125.91	-16.79	£832.12	£167.88	-16.79	
Payroll	£600.00	£450.00	£450.00	£0.00	0.00	£600.00	£0.00	0.00	Payroll now done by BGCBC
Information Commissioner Registration	£40.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	0.00	£40.00	£0.00	0.00	These costs due to be paid in Q4
British Gas - Electricity	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	0.00	£0.00	£0.00	0.00	We are in credit with British Gas for £490.75, so no payments being made.
Internal Audit Costs for 2018/19	£1,500.00	£1,500.00	£1,212.60	£287.40	-19.16	£1,212.60	£287.40	-19.16	
Travel and Mileage	£500.00	£375.00	£45.90	£329.10	-87.76	£45.90	£454.10	-90.82	Only one mileage claim for the year so far.
External Audit Costs	£5,000.00	£5,000.00	£5,000.00	£0.00	0.00	£5,000.00	£0.00	0.00	Actual Costs are unknown at this time, £5,000 transferred to reserves and ring fenced
Welsh Water (Factory Unit)	£150.00	£0.00	£115.64	£0.00	0.00	£115.64	£34.36	-22.91	
<b>Admin Totals</b>	<b>£14,700.00</b>	<b>£8,707.50</b>	<b>£7,445.93</b>	<b>£1,261.57</b>	<b>-14.49</b>	<b>£13,941.76</b>	<b>£758.24</b>	<b>-5.16</b>	
Ward Donations @ £200 per Councillor	£3,800.00	£2,850.00	£1,025.00	£1,825.00	-64.04	£3,800.00	£0.00	0.00	The projection is based on all Councillors using their Ward Donations by year end
Chairmans Allowance	£800.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	0.00	£0.00	£800.00	-100.00	Council resolved at Meeting of 15/5/19 not to pay Chairs allowance

Annex 2



Council Grants	£10,000.00	£7,500.00	£4,356.00	£3,144.00	-41.92	£5,808.00	£4,192.00	-41.92	Decision made by Council 20/11/19 to increase Council Grants to £10,000 and take that from the New Projects budget.
Members Allowance	£2,850.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	0.00	£600.00	£2,250.00	-78.95	Projections is based on 4 members taking up payment in 2018/19
Donation Spending	£17,450.00	£10,350.00	£5,381.00	£4,969.00	-48.01	£10,208.00	£7,242.00	-41.50	
Xmas Lights	£20,000.00	£6,000.00	£6,000.00	£0.00	0.00	£23,000.00	£3,000.00	15.00	Christmas Lights grants to Swffryd, Llanhilleth and Brynithel. New Contract with Centrgreat for main area. £5k coming from new projects budget to offset the forecast overspend on in this area.
Winterfest	£2,000.00	£2,000.00	£1,836.00	£164.00	-8.20	£1,836.00	£164.00	-8.20	£300 - Disney Characters, £265 - Owl sanctuary, £115 - Story Telling, £280 - Rodeo Reindeer, £40 - Ian Bradley (sleigh driver), £526 Glow Company, £350 Animal Encounters.
Panto	£1,300.00	£1,300.00	£1,300.00	£0.00	0.00	£1,300.00	£0.00	0.00	No Money spent on Christmas Panto, transferred to reserves
Contribution to Toilets	£2,000.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	0.00	£0.00	£2,000.00	-100.00	No planned costs for toilets
Allotments Rentals	£510.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	0.00	£542.40	£32.40	6.35	Increase in rental paid for Adam Street, Increase is built into lease agreement
War Memorial Maintenance	£1,500.00	£1,125.00	£1,320.00	£195.00	17.33	£1,500.00	£0.00	0.00	1st Quarter Costs include £265 for spring planting
Wreaths	£125.00	£125.00	£125.00	£0.00	0.00	£125.00	£0.00	0.00	
SWALEC Costs for Christmas Lights 2018	£1,500.00	£562.70	£562.70	£0.00	0.00	£562.70	£937.30	-62.49	Negotiation by Clerk over estimated costs as we had fewer lights for 2018
Replenish Reserves - Defibrillator Project	£15,000.00	£15,000.00	£15,000.00	£0.00	0.00	£15,000.00	£0.00	0.00	Money moved to Reserve Account in Q2
Environment and Leisure	£43,935.00	£26,112.70	£26,143.70	£31.00	0.12	£43,866.10	£68.90	-0.16	
New Projects Staff Costs	£20,000.00	£20,000.00	£20,000.00	£0.00	0.00	£20,000.00	£0.00	0.00	No additional staff costs have been identified, so £20,000 has been moved into reserves
New Projects	£74,200.19	£55,650.14	£65,846.91	£10,196.77	18.32	£65,846.91	£8,353.28	-11.26	£65,846.81 is Project allocated costs to date, see entries in blue shaded area below. Council resolved on 20th November to reduce the New Projects budget by £4,400 and give that amount to Council Grants
Budget	£234,000.01	£166,781.46	£169,161.81	£2,380.35	1.43	£216,039.13	£17,960.88	7.68	
Non Budgeted Items			£3,745.60			£3,745.60			See section in green below
Overall Balance against Set Budget	£234,000.00	£166,781.46	£172,907.41	£6,125.95	3.67	£219,784.73	£14,215.27	6.07	
NEW PROJECTS									
Party in the Park	£11,355.45	This includes the replacement of damaged gazebos for Ffrindiau Tyleri							
Youth Engagement group	£38,551.46								
Defibs project additional	£3,600.00								
Defibs Publicity	£1,840.00								
Drone Video	£1,000.00								
Website review	£1,500.00								









# Budget 2020/21 - Abertillery and Llanhilleth Community Council

Meeting 13 Jan 2020

Salaries: this assumes 1 part time (30 hours) Town Clerk and 1 part time (23 hours) Deputy Town Clerk

Post	FTE (Full Time Equivalent)	Hourly rate	Weekly	Annual Actual	Employer NI Cont	Pension	Total Council Cost
1 Town Clerk NJC Spine Point 36	£39,589.26	£20.52	£615.60	£32,011.37	3,005.47	£5,762.05	£40,778.89
1 Deputy Town Clerk NJC Spine Point 23	£27,538.98	£14.27	£328.21	£17,066.92	1,046.26	£3,072.05	£21,185.23
Totals				£49,078.29	£4,051.73	£8,834.09	£61,964.12

2% Increase as don't know new pay scales  
2% Increase as don't know new pay scales

<b>Training and subscriptions</b>	
2 Memberships of SLCC	£450.00
Training Budget for Officers Including Conference Attendance	£400.00
Training Budget for members	£1,000.00
Totals	£1,850.00

<b>Administration</b>	
Upgrade of IT Equipment - 3 Laptops @ £750 each with encrypted hard drives	£2,250.00
Purchase and set up of Rialtas Accounting System (Year 1)	£645.00
Hosting of Cloud Based Accounting System - 3 Users	£1,122.00
VSM Hosted File Sharing - 18 users	£432.00
65" Android Wireless Smart Monitor + wall brackets and installation	£1,200.00
Bank Charges	£210.00
Insurance	£800.00
One Voice Wales Membership	£2,500.00
Printing and photocopying usage	£700.00
Printer Rental	£1,500.00
Internet and Phone (BT)	£250.00
Web Hosting - Vision ICT	£250.00
Stationary and Postage	£1,000.00
Accountants (payroll)	£600.00
Information Commissioner	£40.00
Electricity from British Gas (Factory Unit)	£0.00
Internal Audit	£1,500.00
Travel and Mileage	£500.00
External Audit 2019/2020	£1,000.00
Welsh Water (Factory Unit)	£150.00
Marketing and Publicity (Well Being, leaflets)	£2,000.00
Totals	£18,649.00



<b>Grants and Members Allowances</b>		
£200 per Councillor - Ward Grants		£3,800.00
Chairmans Allowance (IRP Determination 49)		£1,500.00
Deputy Chairs Allowance (IRP Determination 50)		£500.00
Council Grants		£10,000.00
Specific Responsibilities Allowance (IRP Determination 43) 5 * £500		£2,500.00
Members Allowance (19*£150)		£2,850.00
<b>Totals</b>		<b>£21,150.00</b>
<b>Environment and Leisure all items below</b>		
Xmas lights - Central Contract		£25,000.00
Llanhilleth Tenants and Residents - Christmas lights		£3,000.00
Brynithel Community Centre - Christmas Lights		£1,500.00
Swffryd Community Centre - Christmas Lights		£1,500.00
WinterFest (ALCC Activities)		£2,000.00
Ffrindiau Tyleri (Winterfest and Aberfest)		£2,000.00
Abertillery Rock and Blues Festival		£1,000.00
Allotments		£542.40
War Memorial Maintenance		£1,500.00
Wreaths/Poppies/Remembrance Day		£500.00
SWALEC Costs for Christmas lights		£1,500.00
<b>Totals</b>		<b>£40,042.40</b>

**Overall Total (Stand Still) £143,655.52**

<b>Elective Spending Proposals</b>		
Car Park - CAT		£0.00
Abertillery Underpass - Repair Estimate		£0.00
<b>YOUTH ENGAGEMENT GROUP - Estimate</b>		
BGCBC - Youth Workers		£37,806.00
Space Youth Café - Youth Services (Food Project)		£3,380.00
<b>LEISURE AND TOURISM GROUP</b>		
Party in the Park		£13,000.00
Fun Run		£3,000.00
In Bloom		£0.00
Install benches at war memorial		£1,000.00
Pay for use Toilets (Self Cleaning) in Abertillery town centre		£0.00
<b>WELL-BEING</b>		
In Bloom		£22,000.00
Defibrillator Maintenance		£2,000.00
War Memorial Maintenance (Bounville and BG)		£3,000.00
<b>SHOP LOCAL</b>		
Second drone video of further down the valley		£1,000.00
Weights for remaining council gazebos		£200.00



Halloween Event- Middle Tier of Multi Story Car Park			£0.00
Outdoor cinema (St. Micheals)			£0.00
Craft / Record Fayre			£0.00
Shop local events			£10,000.00
Food Festival - Closure of Church Street			£0.00
<b>Total Elective Spend</b>			<b>£96,386.00</b>

**Overall if doing all Elective Spend and Stand Still**

**£240,041.52**

