

**MEETING OF THE FULL COUNCIL OF ABERTILLERY AND LLANHILLETH
COMMUNITY COUNCIL (ALCC) HELD ON 10 JANUARY 2024 AT 7.00pm
in the Council Chamber at Council Offices, Mitre Street, Abertillery.**

PRESENT

Councillors: Tracey Dyson (Chair); Josh Rawcliffe (Vice Chair); Peter Adamson; Steve Bard; Ralph Henderson (MBE); Chris Hill; Mark Lewis; Barrie Page; Rob Phillips; Nick Simmons; Bernard Wall.

Via Video link: Ben Owen-Jones.

Absent: Michaela Assiratti; Glyn Smith; Graham White.

Officers: Steve Edwards (Clerk); Erika Davies (Deputy Clerk); Molly Jones (Deputy Clerk).

88. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Michaela Assiratti and Graham White.

89. Declarations of interest or dispensations

None.

90. Budget 2024/2025

The Council considered a proposed budget for 2024/2025 of £434,131.

The Chair requested that Steve Bard, Chair of the Finance Committee, provide a verbal report on the budget and how it was generated.

Steve Bard reported that the proposed budget had been scrutinised by each respective committee before being reviewed by the Finance Committee, along with the committee Chairs. The Finance Committee then put forward their budget recommendations for Full Council to consider.

Bernard Wall entered the Chambers at 7:01pm.

Steve Bard also pointed out that the commentary alongside the Loneliness Project budget line in the PlaCE budget was left over from last year and should be removed. He concluded that Council needed to decide:

- Whether to subscribe to a One Voice Wales membership in 2024/2025, which would add £3,500 to the budget.
- Whether to add £1,500 to the budget for the Chairman's Allowance.
- Whether to add £500 to the budget for the Deputy Chair's Allowance.
- Whether to add £12,060 to the budget for Attendance Allowance.
- What amount to budget for Council Grants.

The Council **RESOLVED** not to subscribe to a One Voice Wales membership in 2024/2025.

The Council **RESOLVED** to leave the Chairman's Allowance budget at £0 for 2024/2025.

The Council **RESOLVED** to leave the Deputy Chair's Allowance budget at £0 for 2024/2025.

The Council **RESOLVED** to leave the Attendance Allowance budget at £0 for 2024/2025.

There was some debate as to whether to set the budget for Council Grants budget should remain at £20,000, as proposed at the Finance Committee stage, be reduced to £10,000 or return to the £17,000 budget from last year.

The Council **RESOLVED** to amend the Council Grants budget for 2024/2025 to £17,000.

The Council **RESOLVED** to approve a budget of £431,131 for the 2024/2025 financial year.

91. Precept 2024/2025

The Clerk reported that the projected underspend for the 2023/2024 financial year is only £925.58, meaning for the first time in several years Council expenditure will exceed its income.

The Vice Chair commented that the new reserve account set up with Unity Trust bank was bringing in significantly more interest than the old account, with an estimated annual profit of £2,000.

As different precept amounts were being considered, Deputy Clerk Molly Jones provided updated figures for the price impact per household, calculated using a spreadsheet supplied by Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council.

The Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer stated that he was not comfortable with a precept that was greater than £50,000 under the budget figure, as this would present potential financial risks to Council.

The Chair of Finance suggested a precept figure of £80,000 below the budget figure. A motion to approve a precept of £351,131 was defeated.

The Council **RESOLVED** to approve a precept of £381,131 for the 2024/2025 financial year.

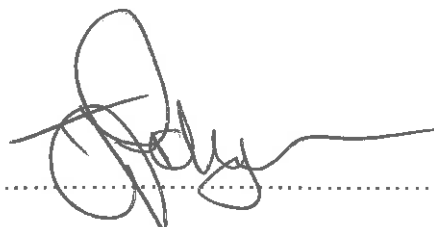
The Clerk thanked everyone for their hard work over the last few months in putting the budget together, stating that it was the most professional budget setting that he had witnessed by the Council.

92. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

31st January 2024.

The meeting ended at 7:59pm.

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



Minutes produced by Molly Jones, Deputy Clerk.