CYNGOR CYMUNED GOETRE FAWR COMMUNITY COUNCIL FINANCE COMMITTEE

# MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD BY TELE-CONFERENCE ON WEDNESDAY 9th APRIL 2025 @ 18.30

## **Present**: Community Councillors Nigel Morrey, Peter Daniel, Lewis Carter & Jonathan Lazenby as Clerk/RFO.

**Apologies**: Councillor Janet Robins.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **ACTION** |
| 1 | Welcome and apologies for absenceThe meeting commenced at 6.30pm with the Clerk/RFO welcoming everyone to the meeting. It was noted that Councillor Robins had advised the last meeting, held on 7th January, that she would be unable to attend this meeting. |  |
| 2 | Approval of Minutes of the Previous MeetingThe minutes of the previous meeting held on Tuesday 7th January 2025 were reviewed. The minutes were proposed as a true and correct record by Councillor Morrey, seconded by Councillor Lewis and passed by a majority vote. Councillor Daniel, who was not in attendance at the January meeting, did not vote.  | Clerk/RFO |
| 3 | Matters Arising(Updates not covered as separate issues under the various agenda items below).There were no matters arising. |   |
| 4 | Cashflow and accounts as at 31st March 20251. CashflowThe Clerk/RFO provided those present with a copy of the March 2025 cashflow position, together with the Unity Trust Bank (UTB) statements covering January, February & March 2025. The cashflow balances were verified to the closing balances in the UTB statements at the end of Jan/Feb/Mar, with Councillor Daniel agreeing to sign to confirm their accuracy in accordance with section 2.6 of the Model Community Council Financial Regulations (Wales).
2. Year End AccountsThe Clerk / RFO also provided the end of year ‘Balance Sheet’, together with the Bank Reconciliation for confirmation before they are formally presented to Council on 28th April for acceptance. They will subsequently form part of our internal and external audit submissions. The Clerk/RFO demonstrated that the closing balances on each document were in alignment with those on the cashflow and the Unity Trust bank statements.

The meeting confirmed the figures for the year ending 31st March 2025 on both documents were accurate, that they aligned with the cashflow under (i) above, and were verified back to the balances on the Unity Trust Bank statements.It was then agreed that they should be presented to Full Council for formal acceptance. This was proposed by Councillor Morrey and seconded by Councillor Daniel and carried unanimously.1. ReservesThe Clerk advised that our year end reserves had increased to £23,205.94, up from £22,788.07, at the end of the last financial year, a modest increase of £417, reflecting the balanced budget that was set, although individual over and underspends can be seen in the cashflow above. Based on this, the Clerk felt the existing level of reserves, at 47% of the precept for 2045/26 and just under 37% of forecast gross expenditure, was appropriate, and this was supported by the Chair, Councillor Morrey. Therefore, at present no changes are required for the forthcoming year, and the Clerk/RFO will advise Full Council accordingly at its meeting on 28th April.
 | Clerk/RFOClerk/RFO |
| 5 | Audit 2024/251. Internal Audit. EH Accountancy have signed our standard terms of engagement. Clerk / RFO is preparing papers to send.
2. External Audit. The external audit papers have now been received for 2024/25, which the Clerk/RFO has already started to prepare. This year we will be subject to the (triennial) Full Transactional Audit. Wales Audit have confirmed the following dates:
* 16th June: Latest date for publishing the audit notice on our noticeboards and web site.
* 30th June: Latest date for approving the Annual Return.
* 1st July to 28th July (inclusive) – Period for public to inspect the accounts and supporting documents.
* 8th August: Latest submission date for the Annual Return. This is about a month later than normal due to the requirement to submit a greater number of papers and accounting / governance records.
* 15th September: The date from which electors can exercise their rights under the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004.
* 18th September: Wales Audit anticipate issuing audit opinions from this date.

All the published dates (except for the final submission date) are within the normal timescales and so should not cause us any issues. In the meantime, the Clerk/RFO will follow the usual timescales with sign-off no later than 30th June. | Clerk/RFOClerk/RFO |
| 6 | Risk Review (inc Health & Safety schedule)The latest Risk Assessment & Health & Safety Checklists were presented to the meeting, with the Clerk/RFO highlighting the following points.1. Precept
	1. Final budget to be confirmed by Full Council at April 2025 meeting.
2. Loss of Income from the Olde Pounde Shop
	1. Rent being received into Unity Trust Bank account. Payments are all up to date. The new 15-year lease (from Sept 2024) is now signed.
3. Reserves – General Adequacy
4. Suggested level – 25% – 100% of one year’s expenditure. End of year reserves as at March 2025 were £23206, (47% of the following year’s £49k precept), and marginally down from 48% as at 31/03/24. They represent just under 37% of the forecast gross expenditure for 2025/26. The Clerk/RFO considers this to represent an adequate short-term reserve.
5. Reserves – Earmarked
6. Previous earmarked funds of £1886 - representing remaining monies from the Micro-Geography Fund grant, have now been transferred from the instant access account and spent on the adult exercise equipment.
7. Salaries / Wages
	1. Increase of wages to £12.30 per hour budgeted and formally agreed at March 2025 Full Council. Updated wage details forwarded to Beverley & Williams for payment from April 2025 onwards. Clerk has updated standing orders to reflect 2025/26 salaries. Letters have been sent to both employees.
8. Recovery of VAT payment
9. The claim for 2024/2025 (£4168.61), was submitted to HMRC on 2nd April and received in full on 7th.
 |  |
|  | 1. Councillors Allowances
	1. It was noted that despite repeated requests, Councillor Grayland did not complete his documentation to either claim the allowance (tax free) or decline it. The Clerk is aware that this omission will be identified by Wales Audit during their more in-depth transactional audit.
2. Training of Clerk / Staff
	1. The Training Plan was reviewed and updated on 12th February 2025 and is published on the web site.
3. Insurance
	1. Insurance renewal received, reviewed by Full Council at January meeting and renewed on 2nd February 2025.
	2. 2025/2026 Employer’s liability cover in place following renewal of Council’s insurance policy and has been posted on stockroom door, notice boards and the web site.
4. Health & Safety
	1. A survey of the trees on Ton Land was undertaken by MCC June 2022. Report received and remedial action undertaken. No other concerns as to vitality of trees. To be reinspected this summer.
	2. St Bartholomew’s Churchyard - Non-compliant wiring was discovered between the church and the footpath and lychgate lighting. Gwenlec Electrics have now replaced this with armoured cabling throughout. All is now compliant.
5. Community & Town Councils Duty under Section 6 of the Environment Wales Act 2016 (Bio diversity plan)
	1. An updated plan is due at the end of this year and should reflect the Green Corridor initiatives which are taking place across the ward. These include wildflower beds and trees in Goytre Park (& Dog walking area), the green at Rhydymeirch and St Bartholomew’s graveyard, as well as other small selected sites.

The **Health & Safety Checklist** update was then provided by the Clerk / RFO. 1. As above, the four Oak Trees on Ton Land need to be safety assessed this year – Clerk / RFO to arrange.
2. Again, as above, the non-compliant wiring for the lighting in St Bartholomew’s graveyard has now been replaced with full armoured cabling throughout and is now fully compliant with current electrical standards.

The Risk Assessments and Health & Safety updates were accepted by the meeting and formally proposed by Councillor Carter, seconded by Councillor Daniel, and carried unanimously. The Clerk / RFO will propose at next Full Council meeting for sign-off. | Clerk/RFOClerk/RFOClerk/RFOClerk/RFO |
| 7 | Date of Next MeetingNext meeting provisionally scheduled for Tuesday 8th July 2025, 6.30pm – with attendance by teleconference. | All |

Council member Date:

Clerk / RFO............................ Date: