

**MAESTEG TOWN COUNCIL
COUNCIL MEETING**

Minutes of a meeting of the **FINANCE COMMITTEE** held remotely via Microsoft Teams, on **Tuesday, 9th February 2021.**

PRESENT:

COUNCILLORS:

C Reeves (CHAIR)

L Beedle, R Collins, P Davies, R Davies, K Edwards,
A James, P Jenkins, R Lewis, R Martin, R Penhale-Thomas,
G Thomas, L Thomas, P White and I Williams.

APOLOGIES for absence received from Councillors W May and S Smith

DECLARATION OF INTEREST:

Cllrs R Lewis declared an interest in items that may relate to Llangynwyd Middle Community Council.

Cllr L Thomas declared an interest in items that relate to AWEN Cultural Trust, Maesteg Town Hall and requested that Items 2 & 3 be discussed at the end of the meeting. Chair of Finance agreed to the request.

390. TO DISCUSS MONTHLY CHECKS

The Clerk advised members that on the last Friday of the month, the Chair of Finance comes to the meeting room to look at the finances before the meeting papers are sent out.

The Clerk places the invoice file, a print out of the cash book, a print out of the receipts and payments along with print outs of the bank statements on the desk in readiness for the Chair of Finance to check. The Clerk then leaves the room for the Chair of Finance to check all the figures / invoices. Additionally, every quarter the Chair of Finance checks the VAT reclaim sheet

Once checked the Chair of Finance discusses any queries before the Clerk prints the cashbook and receipts and payments ready to be included with the meeting papers.

Members requested that a full quarterly budget review is added to the Agenda in order that members can discuss the ongoing budget. Chair of Finance advised that this is done monthly as all the figures are provided to Council, however it was **Agreed** that this be added to the Agenda for more discussion every quarter.

RESOLVED: Clerk to add Budget Quarterly reviews to the Agenda of July, October and January Full Council Meetings.

391. FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Members were provided with the Financial Regulations that were agreed 11/03/2020. The Chair of Finance went through each item and the following amendments were agreed:

- 2.2 to add: information to be with Members at least 5 working days prior to discussion
- 2.4 to get a 3-year plan in place in April to show what the vision is for Maesteg Town Council but to note that things can change rapidly
- 3.4 remove past mayor and add Chair of Finance
- 5.2 currently members only provided with list of payments made, need to include list of payments due
- 5.3 need to add online payments
- 6.5 to also accommodate a debit card set at a maximum value of £250 whereby purchases are agreed by email by 2 of either Mayor / Deputy Mayor / Chair of Finance
- 11 tender figures not to be given prior to the meeting, sealed envelopes to be opened in the meeting
- 13.3 Queried the asset log – Clerk does have a log for benches, bus shelters and grit bins but not for the items within the Council building

392. SUGGESTIONS FOR OTHER CONTRACTS TO BE LOOKED AT

Members were advised that the following contracts have been looked at:

- Cleaning
- Hanging baskets
- Electricity for Llynfi Rd Toilet

Chair of Finance requested suggestions for future contracts to be looked at:

- ITCS – Chair of Communications will look at this once new website live
- Printer – need to check how long the current contract is for
- Fire Alarm Maintenance – Property, H&S Committee to look into this.

393. TO DISCUSS TOWN HALL FUNDING AND PAYMENTS TO AWEN CULTURAL TRUST

Cllr L Thomas left the meeting; therefore, took no part in the discussion on Maesteg Town Hall or AWEN Cultural Trust.

Members agreed that the 2 Agenda items relating to Maesteg Town Hall and payments to AWEN Cultural Trust be discussed together. Members were provided with recent correspondence received from the CEO of AWEN Cultural Trust advising:

I'd like to reassure you and all other Maesteg Town Council colleagues that any funding received from Maesteg Town Council (MTC) for the Town Hall has, and will, always be spent for the purposes proposed and for the benefit of the Hall and its local users. I would certainly hope, that there is no suggestion amongst members that Awen has done anything other than work in sound partnership with the Council to further our jointly held ambitions for the Hall. We value this partnership highly and hope that our strong working relationship will continue.

This particular funding was agreed as a contribution from MTC to the overall re-development of the Hall, hence the annual roll-over in-light of the operational closure of the Hall to activity in the autumn of 2019. The amounts have been included, and promoted, as MTCs contribution to the overall funding effort. Awen is putting over £120, 000 of its own resources into the re-development and has directly raised a further £650,000 to support the successful completion of the project. All these sums, along with the MTC funding, are dedicated as restricted reserves in our accounts i.e. are only released for the purposes they are intended for.

Donation and grant income is not consideration for a supply and is a non-business activity that falls outside the scope of VAT. There would be no VAT to re-claim on this basis as Awen have not invoiced the Council for a sum + VAT.

Should MTC purchase items directly we would need an agreement as to the loan and maintenance of such assets into the future. Practically, this may be difficult as we may end up with parts of a facility or items being split. As it stands, the Council is credited with its contribution supporting the re-development of the whole of the Hall.

A matter for the Council, but buying assets directly would then result in the assets belonging to the Town Council and would therefore also need to incur the appropriate depreciation against the Council's accounts.

I hope the above helps in your on-going discussions. As this is an important component of our match-funding towards the Hall's re-development, I would be very grateful for an early signal of any change to MTC's position so that we can consider how we fill the funding gap.

Members deliberated the correspondence and it was unanimous that Maesteg Town Council support the Town Hall. However, members felt that previous minutes dated 08/01/2019 relating to the support to be given were not clear enough compared with

the email sent to the CEO of AWEN Cultural Trust on 09/01/2019. Members deliberated whereby the minutes state for a re-fit and not towards overall refurbishment. Members queried why VAT couldn't be reclaimed to which Chair of Finance advised that this was responded within the recent correspondence.

Following a lengthy discussion all **agreed** to pay AWEN Cultural Trust either £40K or £30K, Cllr K Edwards then **Proposed** that we write to AWEN with our original intent and ask what the money is to be spent on, or do we over rule the original letter? Cllr G Thomas seconded that we go with the original intent.

Chair of Finance requested a recorded vote for the following:

Proposal = write to AWEN with our original intent and ask what the money is to be spent on = money for specific items

Amendment = Give the money as Grant / Match Funding

Results:

Name	Vote		Name	Vote
Cllr I Williams	Proposal		Cllr R Penhale-Thomas	Amendment
Cllr R Davies	Amendment		Cllr A James	Amendment
Cllr P Jenkins	Proposal		Cllr R Martin	Amendment
Cllr R Lewis	Amendment		Cllr G Thomas	Proposal
Cllr L Beedle	Proposal		Cllr C Reeves	Amendment
Cllr R Collins	Amendment		Cllr P Davies	Amendment
Cllr K Edwards	Proposal		Cllr P White	Amendment

Proposal = 5 Votes Amendment = 9 votes

Following the vote, it was **Agreed** to vote on how much Grant to give AWEN Cultural Trust, whether the £30K or £40K.

Results:

Name	Vote		Name	Vote
Cllr I Williams	£40K		Cllr R Penhale-Thomas	£40K
Cllr R Davies	£40K		Cllr A James	£40K
Cllr P Jenkins	£30K		Cllr R Martin	£40K
Cllr R Lewis	£40K		Cllr G Thomas	£30K
Cllr L Beedle	£30K		Cllr C Reeves	£40K
Cllr R Collins	£30K		Cllr P Davies	£40K
Cllr K Edwards	Left meeting		Cllr P White	£40K

£40K = 9 votes £30K = 4 votes

Following the vote, it was **agreed** to move £40K from Capitol/Reserves in 2020/21 to Maesteg Town Hall to be paid in this Financial Year. The Budget for 2021/22 is

to be looked at as the Reserves for 2020/21 have now been amended. Any future contributions to AWEN for 2021/22 are to requested by AWEN and then discussed at a future date. However, it was noted that no funds have been reserved for AWEN Cultural Trust within the 2021/22 budget and any requests are to be funded through Capitol Projects/Maintenance.

It was **agreed** that when the money is given to AWEN that they keep in contact and advise what the money was spent on.

Cllr G Thomas raised the issue that whilst discussing the Budget need to discuss the CMO and need to review salaries/staffing line and also the lease of a vehicle to be looked at by the Property, H&S. It was agreed to look at this at a later date.

Members also requested that more regular Finance meetings are held throughout the year.

Clerk advised that as this is a Committee meeting, we can only recommend to Council. It was **agreed** to go into Full Council to agree the recommendations, whereby the Mayor took over chairing of the meeting.

394. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) Quarterly budget reviews placed on the agenda to be discussed in more detail.
- 2) Financial Regulations to be agreed – Clerk to make the amendments and email to all members.
- 3) Suggestions for contracts to be looked at by relevant Committees as mentioned in minute 392.
- 4) £40K to be paid to AWEN Cultural Trust within this financial year.
- 5) Salary for the CMO to be added to the staffing budget at a later date.
- 6) Property, H&S Committee to look into the lease of a vehicle for CMO

RESOLVED: All recommendations agreed.

Members noted that some Members are leaving meetings early. Clerk advised that Welsh Government rules state that you don't need to note when members leave the meetings. All agreed that common courtesy needs to be maintained and requested that the Clerk note at what point during the meeting Members leave.

RESOLVED: Clerk to note at what point during the meeting members leave.

Chair of Finance advised that we would seek advice from a solicitor to look at the contract with the Llynfi Road Toilet.

RESOLVED: Clerk and Chair of Finance to seek advice from a solicitor regarding the Llynfi Road Toilet contract.

Minutes emailed to all Councillors to Read on 11th February 2021

**Minutes accepted at a remote meeting of the Council
held on 2nd March 2021**

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Mayor