



Minutes of a HYBRID meeting of the **FINANCE MEETING** held at the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Talbot Street, Maesteg and remotely via Microsoft Teams and, on **Tuesday, 19th November 2024**

PRESENT: Clerk
**COUNCILLORS
IN PERSON:** **G Thomas (Chair)**
 C Davies, P Davies, C Knight, A LeGeyt & L Thomas
ONLINE: R Martin
OBSERVER: Cllr P Jenkins

DECLARATION OF INTEREST:

Cllrs P Davies, A LeGeyt and R Martin declared an interest in items relating to Llynfi River Care Group.

303. TO DISCUSS A REVISED DRAFT BUDGET FOR 2024-25

Members were provided with a revised Draft budget which members discussed the requests from November Full Council. It was **agreed** to recommend the following draft budget to full council with the Chair of Finance to provide a report to explain the changes and the reasons for the proposed % increase.

REVISED DRAFT BUDGET AGREED IN FINANCE COMMITTEE 19/11/2024

changes highlighted in yellow		
<i>EXPENDITURE ANALYSIS</i>	<i>Budget set</i>	Comments
<i>CAPITAL PROJECTS</i>		
<i>CAT Blaencaerau Park</i>	40,000.00	
<i>Bus to Caerau Park & Blaencaerau Trial</i>	30,000.00	Added - a new trial for 50 weeks
<i>Feasability study of Old library / church</i>	10,000.00	Reduce as this is a feasibility study
<i>Welfare park - green spaces feasibility study</i>	10,000.00	Reduce as this is a feasibility study
<i>REVENUE BUDGET</i>		
<i>Staff costs</i>	105,000.00	
<i>Maesteg 200 grant</i>	50,000.00	
<i>Christmas lighting</i>	40,000.00	
<i>Maesteg Festival - Christmas grotto & parade</i>	36,750.00	
<i>Premises running costs</i>	36,750.00	
<i>Maesteg Festival - Summer Festival - Maesteg Welfare Park</i>	35,500.00	50K set aside for Maesteg welfare park - £14,500 allocated in December 2024

<i>Bus service - Maesteg Park</i>	34,020.00	
<i>S.137 donations</i>	25,000.00	Based on current spend
<i>Maesteg Festival - Keeper Run</i>	20,000.00	
<i>AWEN - Town Hall</i>	15,000.00	Added - need a policy for the grants to groups for hire charges
<i>Floral displays</i>	14,000.00	
<i>General Fees</i>	7,000.00	
<i>Digital ROW systems</i>	7,000.00	
<i>Children's Playschemes</i>	6,600.00	Reduced – ask BCBC for attendance figured etc
<i>Dog waste bags</i>	6,228.92	
<i>Office costs</i>	5,775.00	
<i>Telephones and IT</i>	5,775.00	
<i>Members expenses</i>	5,152.00	
<i>Ward Specific - Maesteg East</i>	5,000.00	limit carry over to 5K from last year
<i>Ward Specific - Maesteg West</i>	5,000.00	limit carry over to 5K from last year
<i>Ward Specific - Nantyffyllon</i>	5,000.00	limit carry over to 5K from last year
<i>Ward Specific - Caerau</i>	5,000.00	limit carry over to 5K from last year
<i>Civic Award ceremony</i>	5,000.00	
<i>Insurance</i>	4,200.00	
<i>Mayoral Office</i>	3,465.00	
<i>Van</i>	2,625.00	
<i>Cenotaphs</i>	2,310.00	
<i>CMO equipment allowance</i>	2,100.00	
<i>Llynfi River Care Group</i>	2,000.00	Added - partnership with Llynfi Rivercare Group to purchase PPE / Skips etc
<i>MTC Re-Branding from Grasshopper report</i>	2,000.00	
<i>Training</i>	1,500.00	Reduced - not many Cllrs complete training
<i>Maesteg Cemetery - opening and closing</i>	1,500.00	
<i>Defibrillator Maintenance</i>	1,155.00	
<i>Rugby club anniversaries Celtic & 7777</i>	1,000.00	Reduced as £1,000.00 is for 2026-27
<i>Warm Hubs</i>	-	Removed
<i>Lift Replacement</i>	-	need to look into costs for upgrading / replacing
<i>Elections</i>	-	Use from Reserves if required
<i>Free Fruit initiative</i>	-	Remove as difficult to administer

Totals

594,405.92

Carry over expected	224,734.07
Draft Budget Spend	594,405.92
Reserve %	15.00%
Required Reserve	89,160.89
Total required	-458,832.73
Expected income	62,127.72

Shortfall	-396,705.01
Last years Precept difference	357,242.00
	-39,463.01

New Precept	396,705.01
Reserve	
3 months precept	<u>99,176.25</u>

increase %
9.947696911

Cllr P Jenkins thanked the Committee for the in depth discussions into the revised draft budget and requests that next year a separate budget meeting is held with full council to discuss and approve.

304. TO DISCUSS INTERNAL AUDITOR TENDERS

Members were provided with redacted tenders for Internal Auditor. Members discussed each quote and the Clerk provided the quotes for each tender.

Chair of Finance asked that Quote 2 be excluded from the tender process as they relied on accounting software to complete the audit – members agreed to exclude Quote 2.

Members agreed that the remaining 3 tenders were like for like and all offered attending a meeting virtually to discuss reports.

Quote 1	Quote 2	Quote 3	Quote 4
1-day internal control testing £430.00 1-day year end audit £430.00 Total £860.00 If opting for in person milage will be charged at 45p per mile. If the year end audit is conducted after 30 th June a £50 late fee will be added to the cost of the audit		£1,295 + VAT	Further to our telephone conversation, and my subsequent research, it is my opinion that to complete a thorough and proper Internal Audit for Maesteg Town Council will require both an Interim and Year-end Internal audit. The Interim in the first year would be conducted remotely due to the Welsh Internal Audits having been completed during the first three weeks of October. We recommend that as this would be the first year providing Internal Audit services for your Council, that the Year-end Internal Audit should be conducted on-site, with you. 1.£450.00 per day. £900.00 in fees for the 2024-25 financial year. 2.Mileage is charged at 25p per mile from the office to the closest parking facility to the Council's office. 3.Parking fees, where applicable, are recharged at cost.

			4.Fees may be fixed for a period of 3 years if a service contract is entered into.
--	--	--	--

It was **agreed** to recommend to full council that Quote 4 is accepted on a 1-year trial.

305. TO DISCUSS ACCOUNTING SOFTWARE

To date Clerks received demonstrations on 2 different accounting software packages, however only 1 had provided a quote prior to the meeting. It was agreed to defer this agenda item to the next Finance meeting until multiple quotes are received.

306. TO DISCUSS A WARM HUB POLICY

The Chair of Finance advised that it is not within the remit of the Finance Committee to produce Policies – this agenda item should be deferred to the Policy Committee to discuss.

It was noted that Welsh Government have publicised Warm Hub grants to local authorities and that any applicants should be signposted to the local authority. Clerk advised that BCBC had not responded to whether they will be administering the warm hub grants in 2024-25. It was also noted that if any requests come in this year, they should apply via S137 and Full Council to decide.

307. TO DISCUSS A SELECTION BOX POLICY

The Chair of Finance advised that it is not within the remit of the Finance Committee to produce Policies – this agenda item should be deferred to the Policy Committee to discuss. However, it was also noted that the amount of selection boxes ordered in 2024 was excessive and it should be limited to the schools and grotto only.

308. RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Revised Draft Budget is discussed and accepted.
2. Internal Auditor Quote 4 is accepted for a 1-year trial.
3. Accounting software – deferred to the next Finance Committee meeting until further quote received.
4. Warm Hubs Policy – deferred to the Policy Committee to discuss.
5. Selection Boxes Policy - deferred to the Policy Committee to discuss.

**Minutes emailed to all Councillors to Read on 19th November 2024
Read and accepted at a remote meeting of the Council held on 3rd December 2024**

.....
Mayor