

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE OF  
ABERTILLERY AND LLANHILLETH COMMUNITY COUNCIL HELD ON 6 December  
2022 at 6.00pm in the Council Chamber Mitre Street, Abertillery**

**PRESENT:**

**Councillors:** Tracey Dyson (Chair), Michaela Assiratti, Barrie Page, Josh Rawcliffe, Ben Owen-Jones.

**Via videolink:** Peter Adamson

**Officers:** David Cartwright, Clerk

**33. Apologies for absence**

None

**34. Declarations of interest or dispensations**

None

**35. Minutes – 20 October 2022**

Ben Owen-Jones asked for a reference to St David's Day 2023 to be removed. Subject to that amendment, the Committee **RESOLVED** that the minutes were a true and correct record.

**36. Grounds maintenance contract**

The Chair stated that the Royal British Legion had expressed their satisfaction with the maintenance of the grounds of the Abertillery War Memorial.

Peter Adamson and Josh Rawcliffe spoke in favour of adding a clause to the current grounds maintenance contract to ensure that pest control measures and any chemicals used under the contract were selected to minimise any detrimental effect on local biodiversity.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to authorise officers to agree a two-year extension to the current grounds maintenance contract for Abertillery War Memorial, subject to the inclusion of a suitable clause protecting biodiversity.

**37. Proposed budget 2023-24**

Barrie Page reported that the Council had spoken to two potential contractors regarding the Christmas Lights central contract. Both had agreed that it was highly likely that the lights infrastructure would require a complete overhaul and repair. It was difficult to estimate costs until the electrical system and catenary wires had been individually inspected but both firms had advised that the costs of such an overhaul could reach £20,000. The Chair added that she had spoken to workers from the current contractor who had told her that the infrastructure would be unlikely to remain safe after Christmas 2022. A separate budget line for the overhaul and repair of the Christmas lights infrastructure was added. Cllr Page added that the Christmas Lights Working Group had proposed putting an improved – and, therefore, more expensive – display out to tender for 2023 onwards. The budget proposal of £40,000 for at least the first year of the contract may be reduced under competitive tendering. Peter Adamson said he believed this budget line should be halved.

Ben Owen-Jones stated that he did not believe the Committee should hold a separate budget for grants and expenditure under work to combat loneliness. He believed community groups should apply for funding from the general Council Grants budget. The Chair stated that a separate budget was required as not all applicants for funding from the Loneliness Project would meet the criteria for a Council Grant.

Ben Owen-Jones proposed that the budget line for a new Council website be removed from the Committee's budget proposals as he intended to bring forward plans that this project should be passed to the Community Empowerment Committee.

Ben Owen-Jones stated that he had begun work to consult the local community regarding plans for a Fun Run based in and around Sofrydd and Crumlin in 2023. He also continued to liaise with Islwyn Running Club to forecast the potential costs of such an event.

The Chair reported that she had received quotes from The Met in regards to holding film shows for children during the 2023 summer holidays. The cost of hiring the venue and renting appropriate films was less than expected but the events would entail paying for increased staffing charges. The costs of hiring buses to transport children to the events had yet to be gauged. The Chair proposed leaving the budget line unchanged.

The Committee agreed to support an increase to the Party in the Park budget line as compared with the current year and agreed that the extra funding would be used to invest in increasing the number and standard of events on the field and in advertising plus improved transport to encourage participation by families from outside Abertillery town.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to submit the revised budget proposals for 2023-24.

The meeting ended at 7.13 pm.

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

*Minutes produced by David Cartwright, Clerk*