

Committee: **Council**

Date of meeting: **25 January 2024**

Report Subject: **Presiding Member Fund – Proposals for use**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr S Thomas, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Corporate Overview & Performance**

Report Submitted by: **Cllr C Smith, Presiding Member**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Governance Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
							25/01/24	

1. **Purpose of the Report**
 - 1.1 To consider and agree how the Presiding Member Fund be allocated in support of the communities of Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council.
2. **Scope and Background**
 - 2.1 Following the local government election in May 2022 and the establishment of the current political administration at Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, the Council agreed to set up a Presiding Member Fund.
 - 2.2 It was agreed that unused budget against Members Allowances and Expenses, that accrued as a consequence of any elected member forgoing an element of their remuneration, would be transferred to the Presiding Member Fund. This could be topped up by additional contributions / donations with the Fund being used for the benefit of the communities of Blaenau Gwent.
 - 2.3 The balance on the Fund is £11,720.38, this report makes some initial proposals for use totalling £6,594.23. Proposals for the remainder of the fund will be considered by Council in February / March 2024.
3. **Options for Recommendation**
 - 3.1 *To include Recommendation(s) / Endorsement by other groups, e.g. CLT/Committees/Other groups)*

It is proposed that a total of £6,594.23 from the Fund be allocated as follows:

Amount £	Organisation / Project
1,200.00	Head for Arts / Llanhilleth Pumping Station Mural Project
540.84	St George's Church, Tredegar / to support visit to Uganda to help childrens education
1200.00	Deighton Primary School / Allotment Project
75.00	Local Places For Nature Project (Cwmcelyn) / to compliment Biodiversity works being undertaken
283.39	New Cwm Institute / Maintenance of Building
500.00	Tredegar Miners Memorial Group / Contribution for Memorial Gates
2,160.00	Community Interest Company Nantyglo* / establishment of garden / growing space around Attlee Road
75.00	Abertillery Branch of The Royal Welsh Regiment. - St David's Day Commemoration event
75.00	Llanhilleth Bowls Club - Widening participation initiative
100.00	Zion Miners Chapel - Wildflower Garden Project
75.00	Aberbeeg Community Centre - Happi Cafe project
75.00	Swffryd Community Centre - Cost of living support
75.00	Brynithel Community Centre - Cost of living support
160.00	Briery Hill Allotments / General Maintenance

**CIC not formally established currently, contribution to be released following formal incorporation*

4. **Evidence of how this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**

4.1 The Corporate Plan priorities have been developed to support Blaenau Gwent Communities to thrive. The priorities are:-

- Maximise learning and skills for all to create a prosperous, thriving, resilient Blaenau Gwent
- Respond to the nature and climate crisis and enable connected communities
- An ambitious and innovative council delivering quality services at the right time and in the right place
- Empowering and supporting communities to be safe, independent and resilient

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

5.1 ***Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)***

5.1.1 The balance on the Presiding Member Fund as at 31 December 2023 is £11,720.38, the proposals in section 3 will result in some of the resources available being utilised.

5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

5.2.1 Failure to agree the proposals will result in the Presiding Member Fund being unutilised and organisations within Blaenau Gwent not benefitting from available funding.
To mitigate this risk the proposals in section 3 or alternative proposals should be agreed.

5.3 ***Legal***

5.3.1 The Local Government Act 2000 provides principal authorities in Wales with the power to do anything they consider likely to achieve one or more of the following objects:-

- 5.3.2
- a) the promotion or improvement of the economic well-being of their area;
 - b) the promotion or improvement of the social well-being of their area; and
 - c) the promotion or improvement of the environmental well-being of their area.

5.4 ***Human Resources***

Not applicable

5.5 ***Health and Safety***

Not applicable

6. ***Supporting Evidence***

6.1 ***Performance Information and Data***

6.1.1 Between May 2022 and December 2023 any unused budget against Members Allowances and Expenses, that accrued as a consequence of any elected member forgoing an element of their remuneration, has been transferred to the Presiding Member Fund. There has also been a small number of additional contributions / donations to the Fund.

6.1.2 The available resources for allocation total £11,720.38.

6.2 ***Expected outcome for the public***

6.2.1 The resources will be allocated to projects and organisations supporting the communities of Blaenau Gwent.

- 6.3 ***Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)***
- 6.3.1 The establishment of the Presiding Members Fund was agreed by Council in May 2022.

- 6.4 ***Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)***
- Not Applicable – the Presiding Member Fund will be closed.

- 6.5 ***Preventative focus***
- Not Applicable

- 6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***
- Not Applicable

- 6.7 ***Integration (across service areas)***
- Not applicable

- 6.8 ***Decarbonisation and Reducing Carbon Emissions***
- Not Applicable

- 6.9 ***Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)*** *(All decisions, policy reviews or policy implementation will now require a completed Integrated Impact Assessment) To note a screening template no longer needs to be completed*

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

- 7.1 *State how the work will be monitored e.g. through scrutiny or directorate performance management arrangements*

Background Documents /Electronic Links

-