



Rhuddlan Town Council – Minutes of the meeting on the 12th November 2020

Virtual Meeting during the Covid 19 Restrictions

Present:

Cllr Arwel Roberts (Mayor in the Chair)
Cllr Mike Elgin (Deputy Mayor)
Cllr Jackie Burnham
Cllr Ann Davies
Cllr Reg Davies
Cllr Charlotte Frobisher
Cllr Syd Gaskin
Cllr Mike Kermode
Cllr Gareth Rowlands
Cllr Andrew Smith
Cllr Bleddyn Williams (late arrival)
Town Clerk
Clerical Assistant/Minute Clerk

1. Apologies

Steve Wilson

A member of the public had requested to be present at the virtual meeting for the discussion on a planning application for a holiday park development on the old Rhyl Rugby Ground. A second member of the public had requested to join the meeting but failed to join.

2. Declaration of Interest

Cllr Ann Davies - Planning Matters

3. Urgent Items – having been advised to the Mayor 24hrs in advance

None had been received

4. Planning Application 47/2020/0593 Holiday Park Development

Cllr Arwel Roberts invited Cllr Mike Elgin, Deputy Mayor, to take the Chair for this item.

Cllr Elgin began by reminding Members that following a Council meeting held on 22nd October, the Council had asked for an extension to the consultation period so it

could be discussed at length by Full Council. This was granted. He then proceeded to highlight the points raised on 22nd October. There were concerns about traffic levels increasing, detrimental effect on a nearby Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), lack of direct consultation with Rhuddlan Town Council, but the positive potential for local employment & businesses.

It was noted that the Denbighshire Local Development Plan states that it does not support blots on the landscape particularly in rural areas, and that this application does not meet the criteria of policy PSE 11 & 12.

A discussion followed as to the large size of the holiday park, its impact on residential amenities, Dark Skies policy that has to be followed, and a Natural Resources Wales (NRW) report that concluded the development, if approved, would be likely to cause significant effect on the rural area, and the AONB.

Although it was acknowledged that such a development would benefit local employment and businesses the Town Council object to the application on the grounds of the reasons highlighted above. Cllr Mike Kermode abstained. **Resolved**

The member of the public present thanked the Council for the invite to the virtual meeting and agreed with the decision taken but added a further reason for objecting; there was no connection with the public sewer which NRW had already commented on. The person then left the meeting.

The Mayor returned to the Chair.

5. Police Matters

There were no comments from Members

The report was accepted (Appendix A)

6. Minutes

a) Town Council 13th October 2020.

P57, Cllr Ann Davies asked for an amendment to the seating bench item in that she said it did have a lovely view.

P57, remove “re” on line 24.

P57, Cllr Jackie Burnham wished to amend the Minutes to record that she stated that the maze “only affects the view in the summer”.

P59, Cllr Elgin wished to amend line 2 to say “respondents” in place of local residents.

P59 Cllr Elgin wanted these words adding to line 21. “What he did was a survey of Cllr Burnham’s post on Facebook which had 101 replies”. Line 22 replace the word most with “some”.

P64 Cllr Ann Davies line 25. The speeding survey was between “Rhyl Road” and Pentre Lane.

P67, Cllr Mike Kermode wanted line 29 amending to say that “but should be passed to DCC for advice to schools”.

P68, Cllr Elgin wanted “added that at a meeting with the Mayor and a DCC Officer, they were almost struck by a cyclist”, removed from the Minutes.

Subject to these amendments the Minutes were proposed by Cllr Mike Kermode, seconded by Cllr Gareth Rowlands as a true record, and all voted in favour. **Resolved.**

The Minutes were duly signed.

Matters Arising

- a. **Dog Waste Bag Dispensers** – The broken dispenser at Vicarage Lane has been replaced with a wooden one. The suppliers of dog bags had given a large discount on the latest order.
- b. **Seating Bench** – The Mayor informed Members that the positioning of the bench was now in the hands of the Town Council and that we should consult with residents as to the preferred site. He proposed that the present bench in the Council's favoured position is in good condition and perhaps the new one could be placed elsewhere such as Admiral's Field. It was also suggested that a position alongside the footpath and library in Vicarage Lane playground might be better.

There were concerns raised about the Council's 6-month decision rule which would mean the bench decision could not be revoked until 6 months had passed.

Members were advised that if they wanted to comply with this rule then a decision is held back until the next meeting when Council can discuss rescinding the rule as an agenda item and then deal with the position issue.

A Point of Order was raised that lobbying by local residents meant that Council had to do something about it.

The proposal could not stand due to the 6-month rule on decisions taken by Council.
- c. **DCC Destination Partnership** – At a recent meeting the "Light up Denbighshire" project was discussed and there was a presentation of how Rhuddlan Castle would be lit along with other sites in the County. This would feed into the marketing campaign of Love, Live, Local that Denbighshire was pursuing. Cllr Elgin wondered if it would be possible to create a shot of this on the website. The Town Clerk will make enquires.
- d. **Trees for Admiral's Field** – The Town Clerk informed Members that a meeting with Liam Blazey from DCC was held on 16th October. Liam Blazey to arrange a follow up meeting with Jim Kilpatrick.
- e. **Transport for Wales** – The new Community Engagement Officer will attend Spring 2021
- f. **Cemetery** – It was reported that Denbighshire had contacted a company who specialise in cemetery drainage issues to get a quotation for a drainage survey to be undertaken. This will establish the extent of the problem being experienced and what, if anything, can be done to rectify this. This was not a promise by the County to proceed with any works, merely the survey.

A Member asked that if Rhuddlan's County Councillors were meeting Denbighshire officers for discussions on this issue could you involve residents affected by it.
- g. **Pavement Weeding** – It was reported that no weeding had taken place in the Vicarage Lane area. The resulting discussion centred around the fact that it takes time for operatives to spray the whole town, once sprayed it takes time for weeds to die back and be removed.
- h. **A55 Tourist Sign** - The Mayor informed Members that the sign erection was starting, and the Town Clerk confirmed that the Town Council's £10k financial contribution had been sent to DCC.
- i. **Reports** – The Town Clerk had prepared a paper on Minutes Content and Style for discussion later in the meeting but informed Members that reports (Police, Mayor,

Town Clerk and County Councillors) will no longer be placed in the body of the Minutes but as an Appendix item.

- j. **Remembrance Day** – The Mayor apologised to those who wished to be at the Memorial on Sunday 8th November but thanked them for observing the Covid protocols. He thanked Cllr Andrew Smith for his work in organising the event under such difficult circumstances. The sum of £50 had been raised for the British legion, and there was a sincere, reflective church service on Wednesday 11th November. A question was asked as to who was invited to the Memorial wreath laying. This is done on the basis of those people or organisations who have previously be present. But anyone can attend and lay a wreath by providing a contact to the Town Clerk. A member was concerned that the Conservatives had not been invited and a representative had contacted the Town Council.
- k. **Town Plan Booklet** – This is now at the printers and Members agreed that these would be delivered early in the New Year, seconded by Cllr Burnham. **Resolved.**
- l. **Parking Matters** – An email from DCC was circulated providing a costing for the Town Council to subsidise a period of free parking at both Vicarage Lane Land and Parliament Street car parks. The Town Clerk noted that this issue was a project for the new Town Plan Project Officer who may have alternative ideas. Maybe it would be beneficial to wait his arrival to progress. There is to be the usual Denbighshire free parking during December anyway, to encourage local Christmas shopping. The Clerk was asked to check the start and finish dates for this. Cllr Andrew Smith proposed that the Town Council wait for the new Project Officer to commence his post, Cllr Burnham seconded. **Resolved.**
- m. **Halloween** - The Mayor confirmed that the Head of Education had written to local schools providing advice on Halloween trick or treat this year.
- n. **Car sales on the street near Abbey Court** – A County Councillor had made enquiries and Denbighshire's Leader had stated that cars for sale cannot be advertised and for sale on the highway. The Head of Public Protection, and the Corporate Director for Economy & Public Realm have been informed.

b) 22nd October 2020 – Town Council Meeting to interview Town Plan Project Officer.

The Minutes were proposed as a true record by Cllr Gareth Rowlands, seconded by Cllr Andrew Smith. **Resolved** and signed.

Matters Arising

- a. **Speed Surveys** – The Town Clerk asked for clarification on who would action the decision to having 20 mph limit on Rhuddlan's residential streets. The Town Clerk was advised that Peter Lea and/or Ben Wilcox-Jones were the best officers to contact. Members were informed that the Welsh Government have announced to have 20 mph limits in all Welsh streets in 2 years. Although this is a County issue, the Town Council has a right to raise it on behalf of Rhuddlan residents.

c) 4th November 2020 Website & Information Committee

The Mayor invited Cllr Gareth Rowlands into the Chair as Chair of the Committee. The Town Clerk was thanked for her work in preparing and organising the meeting and the Minute Clerk for his Minutes.

Cllr Arwel Roberts proposed and Cllr Mike Kermode seconded the Minutes as a true record.

Resolved and signed.

Matters Arising

- a. **Council Website & Video** – The Committee had a full and wide-ranging debate on both items and the Minutes show the comments made. It is recommended to Full Council that both are approved as is, with the ability to add other items at a 6-monthly review. Cllr Mike Kermode proposed that the website be approved as is, seconded by Cllr Andrew Smith. **Resolved.**
- b. **Social Media Guidance** – After some debate, the Committee recommended that Full Council investigates a one-way page on social media linked to the Council's website, and that the Town Clerks paper be used as a Rhuddlan Town Council framework for using social media - both as a Councillor and as an individual. Full Council discussed the framework content needing to be more comprehensive, the golden rules for councillors using social media, along with the importance of protecting councillors from trolls' abuse. It was suggested that the framework be shown to Denbighshire's Head of Communication for comment and circulated with the WLGA guidance attached. This was proposed by Cllr Kermode, seconded by Cllr Bleddyn Williams. **Resolved.**
- c. **Style & Content of Council Minutes** – Town Council then undertook a thorough discussion on the following points raised.
- Agreement that meetings were taking too long
 - Minutes need to be brief, accurate, and report key points of debate
 - To avoid, wherever possible, to name Councillors. However, names to be used when proposing or seconding an item, and declaring an interest.
 - Reports being placed in the appendix
 - Using Zoom recording facility for Minutes.

Council agreed to accept the recommendation to change the Minutes style and content as in the paper and adopt it as guidance for the future. **Resolved**

- d. **Webcast of Meetings** – A member of the public had emailed a suggestion that the Town Council should webcast meetings and upload them to the website. The Town Clerk had surveyed the North Wales members of the Society for Local Council Clerks, out of 16 replies only 1 uses webcast. Many are awaiting potential legislation before considering it.

The Committee after a lengthy discussion on the issue decided to recommend to Full Council that webcasting meetings was not pursued.

This topic provided for a lively debate and points raised were

- Difference between webcasting and recording Zoom
- Does it record video & words, consider release audio only
- Transparency, inclusion, accountability, better public engagement
- Current lack of public interest in Council meetings
- How to webcast/record once return to face/face meeting
- Easy access for Minute clerk
- Record meeting but don't broadcast for public release unless requested.

It was proposed by Cllr Mike Elgin that meetings are recorded via Zoom for Minute taking and released once the minutes are approved for clarification and public

information. Cllr Jackie Burnham wished to amend this proposal to recording via Zoom for the Minute taking process but not released to public as a matter of course, only if requested. **Resolved.**

The Mayor returned to the Chair

7. Correspondence from:

a. The Mayor

The report was accepted (Appendix B)

b. The Town Clerk

Several items of the report were put to Members for a decision

- Christmas tree lights switch on – Council discussed that no singing, and only 30 people attending is permitted under Covid restrictions but 2 children from Ysgol y Castell will switch on. **Resolved.** Cllr Gareth Rowlands to ask St Asaph Rotary sleigh to play music. **Resolved** Cllr Frobisher to live stream the occasion. **Resolved**

No decision could be agreed on the locations of the various events above so it was agreed that Cllrs Mike Kermode, Gareth Rowlands and Arwel Roberts form a sub group to finalise the details. **Resolved.**

- Best Decorated House & Business – The Council agreed that the whole purpose was to encourage residents & businesses to light up Rhuddlan, a Town Council prize of £50 for the winning house & business be offered, and that the Town Council decide the winners. Proposed by Cllr Gareth Rowlands, seconded by Cllr Ann Davies. **Resolved.**

Cllr Arwel Roberts suggested Peter Barton-Price judge the best business, seconded by Cllr Ann Davies. **Resolved.**

The report was accepted (Appendix C)

c. DCC Planning Compliance Charter - Circulated for Members information

d. Awel y Mor Windfarm

The Town Clerk had received an e-mail from a concerned resident asking if the Council could make further enquiries to DCC and RWE as to the extent of the area needed for the Development Consent Order and any disturbance it may cause residents. The information has been placed on the Town Council website and will be placed on the noticeboard. The Council decided to formally write to RWE asking why this area of land is required given the proximity to residential properties and having a main sewer underneath it. Proposed by Cllr Gareth Rowlands, seconded Bleddyn Williams. **Resolved.**

e. Rhuddlan Town FC

Correspondence seeking a Letter of Support for the club's fundraising and grant applications. Cllr Mike Kermode proposed that a Letter of Support be provided on the condition that Pengwern Hall pitch and not Admiral's Field. Seconded by Cllr Mike Elgin. **Resolved.**

f. Resident Complaint via DCC Customer Services

A resident of No 7 Admiral's Walk had complained to DCC that trees on land owned by Rhuddlan Town Council are overgrown and need cutting back. Members commented on encouraging tree growth not cutting them back, the property is empty, local knowledge is that the tree and its leaves do not appear a problem, and even if cut back the leaves will still fall. It was seen as a function of

DCC who had recently been congratulated on their leaf cleansing activities. Cllr Mike Elgin proposed that Council do nothing to the trees, seconded by Cllr Andrew Smith. **Resolved.**

g. Repair & Reuse Fund

Correspondence from Repair Café Wales and Benthg circulated to Members. There is Welsh Government funding to support this reuse and repair scheme and the closing date for Rhuddlan to apply to this fund for ready to go projects would be December 1st 2020. There was a concern aired about safety of items being swapped and/or reused by the public, such as electrical. Cllr Andrew Smith proposed that Council do not apply, seconded by Cllr Gareth Rowlands. **Resolved.**

8. County Councillors Report

Cllr Ann Davies

The report was accepted (Appendix D)

Cllr Arwel Roberts

Members felt that Town's County Councillors should push the Commuted Sums item forward at every opportunity.

The report was accepted (Appendix E)

9. Budget/Finance Matters

a. The Town Clerk presented the due payment list for Members approval. Particular attention on the list was drawn to the loan from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLb) having been received. If Members were happy to approve the payment for Coed y Brain it could be sent to the solicitor immediately. Cllr Gareth Rowlands proposed that the payment list be approved, seconded by Cllr Jackie Burnham. **Resolved.**

10. Planning Applications for comment:

Cllr Mike Kermode abstained. Cllr Ann Davies abstained.

Cllr Arwel Roberts, Mayor passed the Chair to Cllr Mike Elgin, Deputy Mayor

44/2020/0799 – 12 Howell Avenue. **No objections**

44/2020/0791 – Highbrake, Princes Road. Members felt that the extensions were close to the boundary line and the property next door. Cllr Ann Davies, who sits on the planning committee, advised that a precedent had been set on Princes Road with an extension to the first floor but not the ground floor. It was agreed to feedback these observations. **Resolved.**

44/2020/0827 & 44/2020/0828 – KFC Trem Castell. Member's observations were that more litter bins be provided by KFC. **Resolved**

44/2020/0864 - Llesty Parliament Street. **No objections**

The Mayor returned to the Chair.

11. Standing Orders Policy

The Town Clerk had circulated a copy of the Council's Standing Orders for the annual review and asked if there were any amendments Members would like to make. There were none forthcoming but as a point of information, Item 12 Rules of Debate was highlighted whereby "A Member shall not address the Council more than once on any motion or amendment".

It was pointed out that at County Council debates a Councillor was allowed to speak twice but required permission for the second interjection. It was made clear that these are the Standing Orders for Rhuddlan Town Council not Denbighshire County Council.

12. Coed y Brain

The Town Clerk had already provided an update on the project under Item 9.

13. Community Matters

The Mayor asked in turn each Member for any matters that they need to raise.

- a. Members were informed that the Rhuddlan Dementia group were to hold a virtual Carol service on Zoom, and that they are looking for a £75 sponsor for it.
- b. The Town Clerk had forgotten to mention under the Budget & Finance item that the Council's budget setting process begins early January so could Members please think about things they wish to support financially and bring this to the attention of the Town Council in Decembers meeting. **Resolved.**

Part 2 Exclusion of the Press & Public

By virtue of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press & public are excluded from discussions on the following items on the basis that disclosure thereof would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

14 Request for Financial Assistance - Relate Cymru

An application for increased relationship support for couple's, individuals, and families in the Rhuddlan area during this difficult Covid pandemic. The total application is for £450 to fund the upskilling of 2 telephone counsellors, the purchase of a Zoom licence for online counselling, and a contribution towards laptop equipment. Cllr Mike Kermode proposed approval of the grant, seconded by Cllr Ann Davies. **Resolved.**

15. Date of Next Meeting – Full Council Thursday 10th December at 7pm

Signed..... Cllr Arwel Roberts (Mayor)

Date.....

