



Rhuddlan Town Council – Minutes of the meeting on the 14th September 2023

Hybrid Meeting

Present:

Cllr Mike Kermode (Mayor)
Cllr Val Simmons (Deputy Mayor)
Cllr Ivor Beech
Cllr Jackie Burnham
Cllr Ann Davies
Cllr Reg Davies
Cllr Arwel Roberts
Cllr Gareth Rowlands
Cllr Bleddyn Williams
Town Clerk
Clerical Assistant/Minute Clerk

There were two members of the public present, three members of Bodelwydden Town Council, PCSO3473 Rich Williams, Sophie Lloyd from Sustrans and Rebecca Musgrave Denbighshire County Council.

1. Apologies

Cllr Mike Elgin

2. Declaration of Interest

Cllrs Mike Kermode, Jackie Burnham, Reg Davies, Arwel Roberts, and Gareth Rowlands.

3. Aelwyn Morgan Award

The award was presented to Richard Polden by the Mayor prior to the Council's Business meeting. The Mayor providing a resume of Mr Polden's work within Rhuddlan's community and praised his hard work as a volunteer both in the town and elsewhere.

After the presentation, the business section of the meeting was called to order.

4. Active Travel Masterplan

Cllr Mike Kermode welcomed Sophie Lloyd and Rebecca Musgrave and thanked them for attending the meeting this evening to provide the first view of the Active Travel masterplan. He explained that it was a listening brief only for the Members, with no questions at this stage but that a future consultation opportunity for Members will be arranged.

Rebecca Musgrave, DCC, stated that on 16th October 2023 a trial of the School Streets element of the Masterplan will be undertaken by Sustrans and DCC. She informed Members what the trial will encompass. The Head of Ysgol Y Castell has been informed of this trial. Sophie Lloyd then described the process used in creating the masterplan by community engagement, technical feasibility, existing infrastructure, engineering issues that may arise, and options of how to mitigate them.

Sophie took Members quickly through the main elements of the masterplan, including individual street suggestions, modal interventions, strategic interventions and posing the question of where to start an active travel route. She stressed that local knowledge and further information gained from the next online and face to face consultations will be used to review and enhance the plans.

A copy of the masterplan will be circulated by DCC to Rhuddlan Town Council for Members perusal and comment.

Sophie stressed that the masterplan is just the beginning and that more consultation will be organised with the Council, local community, and local businesses to shape the masterplan as it progresses to achieve the best outcome for Rhuddlan. DCC will be looking at the best ways to publicise this consultation and would welcome any ideas from Town Council on how best to achieve this.

Cllr Kermode said that discussions about the Council's next Town Plan had agreed to take on board key elements of the master plan, after suitable further discussions and the Town Council will be arranging a special Active Travel meeting to discuss the masterplan proposals as part of this. He thanked Sophie and Rebecca for their presentations.

Members were informed the meeting was being recorded, audio only.

5. Police Matters

a) **Crime Report** – PCSO3473 Rich Williams explained that PCSO Phil Roberts had now left North Wales Police and proceeded to present verbally the crime report. Members were then asked if they had any comments or questions. There were several concerns voiced about fighting on Gwindy Street, e-scooters and how to report an incident. As NWP use their website to list incidents it is very important that all incidents are reported to them so that any pattern or regular occurrence can be acted upon.

b) **Smart Water** – Members had been circulated with a document on Smart Water. It was estimated that the costs of providing a kit to every household was some £18,000. The Clerk had been unsuccessful in finding any grants that might help to these costs. After a short discussion it was proposed that the Council do not purchase any kits but will promote the scheme locally. **Resolved.**

6. a) Minutes of the Meeting held on 13th July 2023

Cllr Gareth Rowlands proposed that they be approved as a true record, seconded by Cllr Arwel Roberts. **Resolved.**

Progress Report from Minutes

i) The Clerk had not received any update from Prestatyn Iach and Members noted that the Rhuddlan surgery will now be open for only 2 days a week because of staff shortages, caused by maternity leave. Following some concerns voiced by Members it was agreed to get details of why and when the surgery will be open so patients can be informed. **Resolved.**

ii) Admiral's Field entrance gates – The Clerk was having difficulty obtaining suitable quotes for the design and replacement of the gates and questioned the need for the gates. Cllr Gareth Rowlands suggested that Council investigates alternative ideas to replace the gates only if they are currently not safe. Assuming they are safe then keep as is until they become unsafe. **Resolved.**

iii) Replacement of Planters on Parliament Street and High Street – members acknowledged the positive work that volunteers provide with the planters and as they are now the property of the Town Council it has a responsibility to maintain or replace them. The cost of the two planters is £950 and agreed to replace them. **Resolved.**

iv) Barrfield Road – a Member noted that although this area had been tidied up there were now weeds growing through the stones. It was agreed to ask the owner to spray the weeds. **Resolved**

v) River Bank knotweed – need to write to Natural Resources Wales as it's on their land.

vi) Flooding – around Kerfoot Avenue, Tan Yr Eglwys, and Gwindy Street. No meeting yet been arranged with DCC officers to discuss the issues as DCC are waiting for information from Welsh Water.

vii) Admiral's Field Circulatory path – construction begins on Monday 18th September 2023

viii) Rhuddlan Community Association – the Mayor attended their monthly meeting when it discussed the Council's request for the Deputy Mayor to become a co-opted trustee. The Association refused this request but offered for the Deputy Mayor to attend as a replacement if the Mayor could not attend for any reason. After discussion it was agreed not to accept this offer. Cllr Mike Kermode proposed, seconded by Cllr Gareth Rowlands. **Resolved.**

b) Minutes of the Town Plan Meeting held on 14th September 2023

Cllr Gareth Rowlands proposed that they be approved as a true record, seconded by Cllr Val Simmons. **Resolved.**

Progress Report from Minutes

The Mayor stated that the meeting had been constructive and described the next stage of the process in agreeing a new town plan was explained by the Clerk. Once the amended plan was populated with all the ideas, Members will be given an opportunity to score them into a priority order and those scores be aggregated to provide a corporate priority order for approval by Full Council

7. Correspondence from:

a. The Mayor

The Mayor had circulated his report prior to the meeting.

He added two items verbally at the meeting. The first was attending the inaugural youth club evening and the second was attendance at the Odyn to see the new defibrillator purchased by the council with the support of the Rhuddlan Scout Group. Members thanked the Mayor for his work during the recess period.

The report was accepted

b. The Town Clerk & Town Plan update.

The Clerk had circulated his report in advance of the meeting and read through the various items of correspondence and project updates from the town plan.

Several elements of the report were discussed - in particular:-

- A resident has complained about graffiti and ball kicking on an Admiral's Field boundary fence. Cllrs Mike Kermode and Jackie Burnham declared an interest and left the meeting. The Members had a lengthy discussion on this issue noting the comments that the ball kicking item mainly happened when the Dragons FC were on the field. The resident requested that the Council highlight this to the Dragons asking them to monitor the situation. The resident also suggested that Council might plant shrubs/trees once the circulatory path was constructed to reduce the vandalism and ball kicking issues.

It was also noted that this is an area earmarked by Council previously for a wild flower area and that DCC Countryside may be able to assist with supplying the shrubs/trees.

Cllr Gareth Rowlands proposed that any planting will be done as part of the agreed wilding of the area post path completion and a letter be sent to Dragons FC and the new youth club leader to encourage young people not to vandalise or kick balls against the fence. Seconded by Cllr Bleddyn Williams. **Resolved.**

The Clerk was tasked with investigating DCC contributing free plants and if there would an interest in young people planting them to encourage participation. **Resolved.**

Cllrs Kermode and Burnham were readmitted to the meeting.

- A resident had requested that the Council consider assisting with the repair/replacement of his property boundary wall adjacent to Admiral's Field entrance path, which was now leaning over. Members agreed that nothing the Council had done had contributed to the

wall leaning over and therefore it was not the Council's responsibility. Proposed by Cllr Gareth Rowlands, seconded by Cllr Bleddyn Williams. **Resolved.**

- An invitation from One Voice Wales to send a representative to their AGM and Annual Conference to be held at the Royal Welsh Showground on September 30th. In response to this Cllr Ivor Beech would check his commitments and if able, would attend. **Resolved.**

The report and project update were accepted

8. County Councillor Reports

a. Cllr Arwel Roberts had circulated his written report for Members attention.

In particular he added verbally that he was shocked to hear that BCHUB had still not enacted the plans to modernise the Royal Alexander Hospital in Rhyl. These plans were announced in 2009 with an expectation to be completed in 2017. He also stated that DCC were facing some very serious financial cuts for the coming financial year. An example was given of not replacing any staff member that might leave the authority. In general terms DCC was conducting surveys of their buildings for reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) due to the dangers of collapse recently reported in the media. The former Rhyl rugby ground in the Waen planning refusal for a leisure park has been upheld by appeal so it is unlikely to proceed at this time.

The report was accepted

b. Cllr Ann Davies had not prepared a written report but verbally informed Members of the following matters. An update on the Nant Close wild flower meadow. Informed Members that The Rise appeal against the planning refusal for four dormer bungalows has been won. DCC have served a Planning Enforcement Notice a property on Hylas Lane. In response to a question about providing a written report Cllr Ann Davies responded that she will, when time permits.

9. Mayoral and Consort Council Chains of Office

- a) The Mayor's Chain has no more space for recording the names of the future Mayors. The Clerk has received a quote for £1,848.16 to modify the chain by adding an inner chain with 14 new links. It was proposed to accept the quote by Cllr Gareth Rowlands, seconded by Cllr Arwel Roberts. **Resolved**
- b) The Mayoress chain needs to be changed to add Consort or an interchangeable Consort pendant be purchased. The current pendant was donated to the council and it was agreed that this pendant be retained to preserve the engraved inscription. It was proposed by Cllr. Ann Davies and seconded by Cllr. Jackie Burnham that a Consort pendant will be purchased which can be worn on the existing chain. **Resolved.**

10. Twinning

The Mayor had drafted a report on Twinning as resolved at the June Council meeting. The report looked at the issue of reinvigorating of twinning relationships across the EU as raised by One Voice Wales. It included several factors to be considered such as location/similarities, costs/benefits, organisation by whom, and community support. After a short discussion, it was suggested making enquiries with towns in the Republic of Ireland as a Celtic nation initiative, with particular mention of Carlow as a potential town. Proposed by Cllr. Arwel Roberts and seconded by Cllr. Gareth Rowlands. **Resolved.**

11. Cemetery – Flooding Problems

The Clerk reported that DCC had emailed stating the business case for the drainage improvements had not been approved by DCC finance scrutiny committee and he had asked for feedback as to why it failed. DCC were disappointed that the Town Council couldn't assist by allowing them to utilize the soakaway on the MUGA car park. Members were reminded that Town Council had an independent surveyor's report on the ground conditions which proved that the soakaway was not working.

After a discussion it was agreed to inform DCC again of the details of Town Council's independent survey and the historic position relating to DCC's past planning conditions and drainage construction by the developers of Clos Dewi Sant. Cllr Mike Kermode so proposed, seconded by Cllr Gareth Rowlands. **Resolved.**

13. Request for a Road Sign

Council had received a request to provide a directional road sign to the Catholic Church on Vicarage Lane. Cllr Gareth Rowlands proposed that this be requested that DCC consider this at their expense. Seconded by Cllr Val Simmons. **Resolved**

14. Review of Policies

Model Standing Orders – circulated for approval as amended and agreed by the Working Group on 5th September. Proposed to approve by Cllr Mike Kermode, seconded by Cllr Gareth Rowlands. **Resolved.**

15. Planning

The Clerk took Members through the applications.

Cllr Arwel Roberts declared an interest as he sits on the DCC planning committee.

Pre-Planning Application consultation – Former Rhyl Rugby Club, Waen, Rhuddlan. As previously mentioned, the planning inspector had upheld DCC refusal for a leisure park development. Cllr Gareth Rowlands proposed that Town Council's original objection be repeated, seconded by Cllr Bleddyn Williams. **Resolved**

44/2023/0470 – Change of use from shop to hot food takeaway/restaurant at Clwyd House, High St, Rhuddlan. This application has been amended due to resident's objections. Members acknowledged residents objections and it was proposed that Council objects on the grounds

of adversely affecting resident's lives, increased fire hazard, noise, and safety. This proposal from Cllr. Gareth Rowlands and seconded by Cllr. Mike Kermode. **Resolved.**

44/2023/0534 – Erection of extension and alterations to Sunnymead, 4 Fairlands Crescent, Rhuddlan. No objections.

44/2023/0578 – Erection of classroom extension, playground alterations, and associated works at Ysgol Y Castell, Rhuddlan. Cllr Ann Davies declared an interest. No objections.

44/2023/0609 – Felling of a tree 3 Vale View, Rhuddlan. No objections.

16. Budget & Finance

a) Grant Requests

i) **Rhuddlan Town Community Association** – Cllr Reg Davies declared an interest. To review the association's bank statement that had been missing from the original application. Cllr Arwel Roberts proposed approval of the £4,000 grant, seconded by Cllr Ivor Beech. **Resolved.**

ii) **Love North Wales** – To review bank statements missing from original application. Cllr Ann Davies proposed approval of the grant, seconded by Cllr Arwel Roberts. **Resolved**

Applicant offered to attend a future Council meeting for a presentation of their work which Members welcomed.

iii) **Cerebral Palsy Cymru** – The application was in the form of a generic letter. Discussed by councillors and proposed by Cllr. Gareth Rowland that no grant is awarded, seconded by Cllr. Jackie Burnham. **Resolved**

iv) **St Mary's Church, Rhuddlan** – The application is for £2,250 towards energy costs for community events, maintenance of car park, grounds, and floodlighting. Cllr Reg Davies declared an interest. The Clerk reminded Members that under legislation Council cannot fund churches unless a general improvement to assist the community can be demonstrated by means of the application. After a discussion it was proposed to support the energy costs and floodlight elements of the application only. Cllr Mike Kermode proposed that £1,250 be approved, seconded by Cllr Ann Davies. **Resolved.**

v) **Rhuddlan Allotment Society** – Application for £700 towards their electric and water standing charges for 2 years. Cllr Gareth Rowlands declared an interest and left the meeting. There followed a discussion around general household energy costs being increased and an observation that the Allotment Society should increase allotment rental and investigate alternative income generation. Members were generally supportive of the benefits the allotments provide for Rhuddlan but some were against approval. In conclusion Cllr Arwel Roberts proposed approval on the condition that

this was a one-off grant whilst the society looked to increase their income generation as they do demonstrate benefit to the town. Seconded by Cllr Ivor Beech. **Resolved.**

Cllr. Gareth Rowlands was readmitted to the meeting.

b. Payments list

Agreed the entries on the list. **Resolved**

17. Community Matters

a) Cllr Mike Kermode highlighted the great success that several organisations in Rhuddlan had achieved in the “Your Neighbourhood” awards, as part of the Wales in Bloom scheme. The Nature Reserve achieving a Level 5 as outstanding, plus the award of a National Distinction. The Allotment Society was awarded as Level 5 and the Bowls Club as Level 4.

b) Cllr Gareth Rowlands, in acknowledging the success of the above, suggested that Council acknowledge all who have assisted the organisations in their great achievements such as the Fagan family and DCC Countryside Services. Cllr Ann Davies mentioned other people who had also contributed to the development of the project. Cllr Mike Kermode proposed the Town Council write formally to all of them, acknowledging their involvement. **Resolved.**

c) Cllr Arwel Roberts reported that BCHUB had sent out the next round of Covid boosters but included the wrong venue address. He also noted that the Knights area boundary looks untidy and asked that Council contact the owner to clean up. **Resolved**

d) Members were informed that the Town Plan meeting had discussed a collaborative approach for a new cemetery, involving neighbouring councils; this was now being taken on by the Mayor who has invited the Mayors/Chairs of neighbouring Councils to an initial meeting to discuss the issue.

18. Date of next meeting – 12th October 2023 Full Council Hybrid Meeting 7pm