



Rhuddlan Town Council – Minutes of the meeting on the 12th October 2023

Hybrid Meeting

Present:

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

1. Apologies

Cllrs Ann Davies and Bleddyn Williams.
There was one member of the public present and PCSO 3473 Rich Williams

2. Declaration of Interest

None given

3. Urgent Matters

None

4. Police Matters

PCSO Williams apologised for not having prepared a written report. He informed the council of a cold calling scam and also about several complaints received about the library car park, playground and surrounding grassed sections regarding dog fouling and young people smoking cannabis. A Member mentioned that at a recent meeting with the librarian the provision of a fence to block off the grassed area at the rear of the library was suggested.

The Mayor then stated that a resident near Admiral's Field had reported an issue of someone urinating on the field in full view of their house and the resident had also sent an email to the council about this.

A Member reported that since the 20mph limit, vehicles are speeding down Highlands Road between 5-6pm. PCSO Williams advised to contact DCC to ask them to install a speed data recording device to get evidence.

Another Member reported the dangerous and illegal use of e-scooters in Rhuddlan especially on Rhyl Road in front of the police station. One even had a blue flashing light on

it. PCSO Williams stated they have received no formal complaints and described the difficulties the police have in stopping and identifying the users of e-scooters. The same Member stated that the police did not call to see him regarding an incident reported at the June meeting regarding a man begging. PCSO Williams was not aware of this so a description of the person begging was given.

The meeting was recorded from now audio only

Continuing with police matters, a Member reported the use of a child's e-motorbike on Admiral's Field and asked that the police monitor the situation. The Clerk and PCSO Williams once again asked Members to encourage residents to report incidents to the police either on 101 or webchat so they can be properly logged and acted upon. PCSO 3473 Williams then left the meeting.

A member stated that PCSO Philip Roberts had resigned and left the Police. It was resolved that a letter of thanks be sent to PCSO Roberts for his work in Rhuddlan proposed by Gareth Rowlands, seconded by Cllr Arwel Roberts **Resolved**.

5. Minutes of the Meeting held on 13th July 2023

Minor amendment – Clos Dewi Sant should read Clos David Owen.

Cllr Gareth Rowlands proposed that subject to the amendment the minutes be approved as a true record, seconded by Cllr Jackie Burnham. **Resolved**.

Progress Report from Minutes

- i) The information materials relating to Smart water have not yet been received from the Police.
- ii) No response from Joe Lunn at Prestatyn lach surgery had been received regarding the council's enquiry about Rhuddlan opening hours. Members agreed to escalate to Alison Kemp BCHUB and to copy in the AM and MP. Proposed by Cllr Mike Kermode, seconded by Cllr Gareth Rowlands. **Resolved**.
- iii) NRW have responded that the river bank knotweed is not on their land and is not compromising the flood defences. Members were not satisfied with this response and discussed at some length as to who did own the river bank and whose responsibility it was to remove the knotweed. It was hoped that time might be available for a visit to the site as part of the next meeting of the Nature Reserve MAG to get views from DCC's Countryside Services team. It was stated the issue is not affecting any council assets. A member stated that knotweed does slow water down and can impede the flood defences. **Resolved**.
- iv) Brief details of the Town Plan's 13 agreed projects have been drafted and will be circulated tomorrow for Members to review and rank as their priorities by Friday 20th October.
- v) The Admiral's Field circulatory path construction is progressing and when it is completed DCC will be invited asked for advice on how best to add our wilding plan.
- vi) Letter has been sent to resident reference the replacement/repair of his boundary wall with Admiral's Field stating that this is not Council's responsibility.
- vii) Mayor's chain and pendants have been ordered.

- viii) Twinning contacts received for Carlow and the Clerk to progress.
- ix) Drawings of soakaways and ditch around Clos David Owen been forwarded to DCC and no response received regarding the direction sign to the Catholic Church.
- x) The Mayor has invited the Mayors/Chairs of local Councils to a meeting on October 26th to discuss the potential of collaborating on efforts for a new cemetery in the area. Members thanked the Mayor for this initiative.

6. Minutes of the Events Committee Meeting held on 3rd October 2023

Cllrs Mike Kermode, Mike Elgin & Val Simmons who attended the meeting agreed that the Minutes were a true record. **Resolved.**

Progress Report from Minutes

- The Clerk had investigated a suitable PA/microphone/music system for events at a cost of £320 plus VAT. Cllr Mike Kermode said that 3 different systems had been looked at and this was the cheapest and most suitable one and proposed its purchase, seconded by Cllr Arwel Roberts. **Resolved.**
 - A Member reported back that Rhyl Rotary Christmas Float would be able to attend the Rhuddlan Christmas Light Switch on Monday December 4th at 4pm and suggested that the Council might give a £50 donation to Rotary. The events committee agreed. Proposed by Cllr Arwel Roberts, seconded by Cllr Val Simmons. **Resolved.**
 - Rotary had also offered a Santa to accompany the float, to which Council agreed to write thanking them for the offer, but declining it. **Resolved.**
 - Cllr Ivor Beech agreed to be recruited as Santa again this year for the community carols around the tree. **Resolved.**
 - A discussion took place on how best to inform Rhuddlan residents of the various events planned. One suggestion was a paper newsletter costing £700 for printing and delivery. Members agreed not to follow this suggestion due to the costs involved. Instead, the Council agreed to promote the events on social media, a poster, a small leaflet which can go to shops and the library and an article in the parish magazine. **Resolved.**
- The Mayor reminded members of the importance of the Remembrance Sunday event and he hoped that there would be a good turnout by them.

7. Minutes of the Biodiversity Meeting held on 12th September 2023

Cllr Val Simmons took Members through the minutes and Cllr Arwel Roberts proposed them to be a true record, seconded by Cllr Gareth Rowlands. **Resolved.**

Any progress on the various biodiversity actions will be reported back to Council. **Resolved**

8. Minutes of the Special Active Travel Plan Meeting held on 5th October 2023

Cllr Val Simmons proposed that the Minutes were a true record of the meeting. Seconded by Cllr Gareth Rowlands. **Resolved**

Progress report from Minutes

- a) Library service reduction - The Mayor informed Members of the meeting with DCC and a note of this had been circulated for discussion. He added that the public consultation

exercise was to finish on 30th October, placed before Cabinet for discussion on 21st November with a planned implementation on April 1st 2024 if agreed by Cabinet at DCC.

The Mayor stated that the library managers held Rhuddlan library as an exemplar partnership library, with greater use than most other county libraries post-Covid and a great perceived value to residents and many community groups. He asked councillors to encourage residents and library users to engage with the consultation. It was noted that without Town Council's financial contribution of £12,000 the service would not be as successful as it is now.

The issue was fiercely debated with many reasons noted why Rhuddlan library should be saved from any reduction in service. This included use by Welsh Language group Menter Iaith, book club, children attending on Saturday whilst not in school, the importance of using libraries for other DCC services e.g. One Stop Shop, and the small amount of money saved by the reduction in opening hours. In addition to the Town Council's financial contribution councillors were concerned about the potential impact to peoples' wellbeing and hoped it did not impact the proposed Rhuddlan museum project.

The Council believe that Rhuddlan library should be considered differently particularly in view of the councils' financial contribution.

Cllr Gareth Rowlands proposed that a letter be sent stating Council's dissatisfaction at any reduction in service at Rhuddlan and include the above reasons as to why it should be treated differently particularly the financial contribution. Seconded by Cllr Arwel Roberts.

Resolved.

b) Ysgol Y Castell School Active Travel Zone – The Mayor reminded Council of their resolutions above to approve the meetings Minutes that a request be made to Sustrans and DCC to arrange more meaningful consultation exercises and conduct a survey to gather information on the likely numbers of children that may walk/cycle to school. If the feedback shows that the school zone proposals do not appear to increase active travel, then there is little point in pursuing them further.

Members noted that a similar school zone at Bryn Hedydd school, Rhyl had also received no consultation. Reports about the active travel exercise in Llangollen showed little consultation had taken place with the town council there.

The pilot road closure exercise is on Tuesday 17th October and councillors were encouraged to attend and gather feedback.

10. Correspondence from:

a. The Mayor

The Mayor had circulated his report prior to the meeting.

He added he was arranging his Charity Concert on December 9th at St Mary's church in aid of Ty Gobaith and Hope House children's hospices. Tickets are £10 each.

The report was accepted

b. The Town Clerk's projects 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:-

- The issue of the untidy state of the library entrance area highlighted by the Community Group, agreed to be report to DCC for maintenance. A Member wished to add that maintenance is also required at the Knights sculpture area. **Resolved.**
- Correspondence from the Community Group who did not want the planters on Bodrhyddan Avenue and unless the Town Council wishes to do otherwise, they can be removed. Cllr Arwel Roberts proposed that they are removed by the Community Group as they own the planters, seconded by Cllr Jackie Burnham. **Resolved**
- Slow Walks request that Town Council help validate and promote their walking routes. Members discussed the request noting that these are existing routes and were happy to post on social media and pass on to community walking groups to see if they would support the initiative. **Resolved.**
One Member voiced their concern that public footpaths across his land could easily be joined to Glan Clwyd Hospital to allow patients to have somewhere to walk but was experiencing difficulties with DCC progressing the opportunity. Cllr Arwel Roberts as a County Councillor offered to put the Member in contact with the officer responsible for public footpaths which was accepted. **Resolved.**
- The Clerk stated the council need to be aware of further potential cuts to DCC services which may result in Rhuddlan Town Council having to consider supporting locally and the potential impact on next year's budget and precept. It was agreed that Council await further information from DCC about the proposed cuts before having any further detailed discussions. **Resolved.**
- Members discussed the ongoing programme of Community Markets after March 2024. The Community Centre had been approached to take this over but the initial response had been fairly negative, although they are investigating further. Cllr Reg Davies declared an interest. Members commented that the Town Council started this as an initiative in the hope that a local community group would one day take it on. In the meantime, the Council should continue the market bookings until April 2024. The Clerk will continue with his discussions with the Community Centre. Proposed by Cllr Gareth Rowlands, seconded by Cllr Jackie Burnham. **Resolved**
- Whilst noting the Admiral's Field path was under way, a Member asked that the drain near the allotment path should be lifted and examined for clearance of any debris to reduce potential flooding in that corner of the field. **Resolved.**
- A member stated the MUGA lights' timer is broken and an electrician should be engaged to replace the timer. **Resolved**
- The Mayor mentioned the complaint from the resident about people urinating in Admiral's Field near her home. A discussion followed on directing people to the Hwb toilets, use of more pictorial signs, use the old

witch's hat pole, and potential upgrading of the current toilet signs. It was agreed that the Clerk would put a directional sign on the pole. **Resolved**
Cllr Jackie Burnham proposed to use a sticker on the large site maps to direct people to the Hwb toilets, seconded by Cllr Gareth Rowlands. **Resolved.**

The report and project update were accepted

11. County Councillor Reports

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

In particular Members discussed the item on cattle being present on the public footpath which follows the River Clwyd towards Rhyl. It was noted that DCC/NRW both were not interested in assisting. A Member stated that Town Council had no jurisdiction on this matter. Another Member commented that a local landowner did own the river bank right up to the toe of the defence banking and that a site meeting could be arranged with the DCC officer responsible for footpaths to see what can be done. Cllr Arwel Roberts as a County Councillor will try to arrange and invite the Member who suggested it. **Resolved.**

Cllr Roberts then verbally added that he had run out of dog waste bags which DCC are not going to provide in the future. A Member noted that Town Council has several boxes in storage and proposed that they be given to Cllr Roberts for use around Rhuddlan. Seconded by Cllr Jackie Burnham. **Resolved.**

The extension to the school is nearly finished and a second phase of the extension is to continue soon.

The report was accepted

12. Review of Policies

The Clerk informed Members that it was Council's duty to update policies annually and had circulated the Disciplinary Policy, Dignity at Work Policy, and the Equality and Diversity Policy for review,

It was proposed by Cllr Gareth Rowlands that the three policies be approved as is, seconded by Cllr Jackie Burnham. **Resolved.**

Cllr Mike Elgin left the meeting due to internet problems with his zoom connection.

13. Planning

The Clerk took Members through the applications.

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

44/2023/0642 – Erection of single storey extension to 2 Maes Y Bryn, Rhuddlan. No objections

14. Budget & Finance

a) Grant Requests

None received

b. Payments list

All entries were agreed. **Resolved**

Members were asked if they wished to continue the contribution it makes for 1 hour free parking at Parliament Street car park in partnership with DCC as the cost is likely to increase in the next financial year. Members commented that the ticket machine needs to be more user friendly, particularly how to change from Welsh to English. Also was it cost effective in terms of the high street businesses seeing the benefit? A Member who is a business owner confirmed it did have a positive benefit. Cllr Gareth Rowlands proposed to continue the contribution payments. Seconded by Cllr Jackie Burnham. **Resolved.**

15. Community Matters

- a) Cllr Reg Davies had noticed graffiti on the pillars near the river Clwyd cycle path and asked Council to request DCC remove it. **Resolved**
- b) Cllr Arwel Roberts highlighted that the Nature Reserve next meeting was tomorrow 13th October and that they will be discussing the provision of extra parking by the sensory garden element, which he hoped would get through.

16. Date of next meeting – 9/11/2023 Full Council Hybrid Meeting 7pm

SignedCllr Mike Kermode (Mayor)