



Rhuddlan Town Council – Minutes of the meeting on the 11th April 2024

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 Mike Elgin
Cllr Arwel Roberts
Cllr Gareth Rowlands
Cllr Bleddyn Williams
Cllr Rob Williams (arrived after the start of the meeting)
Town Clerk
Clerical Assistant/Minute Clerk

There were 3 members of the public present

1. Apologies

None given

The meeting was recorded from this point (audio only)

2. Biodiversity Training

Postponed until a future meeting.

3. Declaration of Interest

Due to recent public comments on social media and Councillors' concerns about such declarations, the Mayor asked the Town Clerk to remind the Members what personal and prejudicial interests are and how members should declare such interests, the form they must complete and the publishing of the declarations of interest on the council website. This was then done by the Town Clerk.

There followed a discussion on declarations received on an item at last month's meeting regarding Admiral's Field use by Rhuddlan Town FC. Highlighted was guidance one member received in an email from DCC's Monitoring Officer. Cllr Ann Davies proposed that the Monitoring Officer's email be included as an appendix in the Minutes of that meeting. Cllr Mike Elgin proposed an amendment that Council first check that the email could be legally publicised due to Data Protection concerns, which was seconded by Cllr Jackie Burnham. It was voted not to have the email as a part of the minutes. **Resolved.**

It was stressed to members that it is for each individual Councillor's duty to make appropriate declarations of interest. Clarification of the rules regarding personal and prejudicial interests will be included on future agendas for Council meetings, for their guidance. **Resolved.**

Cllr Arwel Roberts declared an interest in the planning item as he is a DCC Planning Committee member and a prejudicial interest regarding a grant application from Rhuddlan Bowling Club of which he is a member. Cllr Mike Elgin declared a prejudicial interest regarding the grant application made by Rhuddlan Bowling Club as he is a member. Cllr Mike Kermode declared a personal interest in connection with the election of a Deputy Mayor because his daughter will be one of the candidates.

4. Urgent Matters

None received

5. Police Matters

The Mayor voiced his disappointment that no police officers were present or written report provided. Members echoed this disappointment and stressed the importance of regular communications with the local police. In response to a Member's query the Town Clerk does send a meeting agenda to the police Inspector Kevin Smith, as a reminder.

6a. Minutes of Town Council meeting held on 8th February 2024.

Amendments. Add Cllr Burnham as an attendee. The Town Clerk to review and modify the minute referring to the amendment to the proposal regarding Rhuddlan Town Football Club to be financially supported by up to £50k as a way of supporting their work in finding an alternative site and to check who proposed and seconded the proposal regarding the Rhuddfest grant application. Following the above amendments the Minutes were proposed as a true record by Cllr Gareth Rowlands and seconded by Cllr. Arwel Roberts. **Resolved.**

7. Progress Report on the above

i) Council's grant application for the Admiral's Field summer family event had been allocated the reduced sum of £2,000. The Events Committee will discuss how this affects our plans at their next meeting. Cllr Mike Kermode proposed that £5,000 from the event's budget be earmarked to help finance the event. Seconded by Cllr Mike Elgin. **Resolved.**

ii) Concerns about Arriva buses not stopping within Tweedmill has been supported by Prestatyn Town Council.

iii) Ysgol Y Castell have confirmed their involvement with the road safety poster competition and that their posters are expected shortly.

iv) N Wales Tourism CEO has been invited to attend one of our future meetings.

v) A Zoom meeting was held recently with DCC officers to discuss DCC Cabinet's proposals to close public toilets, notes of that meeting had been circulated to Members. Cllr Ann Davies said that she was concerned that the Town Council had an undue urgency about this issue. The Mayor responded that it was important for the Town Council to know in good time what the options and costs of future actions might be if DCC did close Rhuddlan's public toilets. Members noted the small percentage of savings the toilet closures would provide to the overall DCC budget. Data was awaited from DCC regarding the Rhuddlan toilet usage and associated operating costs. Cllr Arwel Roberts stressed the need for timely information and for a positive dialogue with DCC and that he felt it was ignorant of people to say, what's the hurry, because the Town Council needed to know what is happening. Cllr Ann Davies reminded Cllr Arwel Roberts that there is such a thing as freedom of speech and that she would be speaking to the Monitoring Officer regarding his comments. Councillor Roberts said that he did not mention any names.

vi) Rhuddlan Community Group had commenced their memorial garden project.

vii) Confirmation that the CCTV agreement includes a process to get ad-hoc monitoring in relation to reviewing dog fouling concerns.

At this point Cllr Rob Williams asked about the declarations of interest made in March about the Admiral's Field issue and asked for clarification about the email from the Monitoring Officer, this had already been discussed earlier on, before he joined the meeting. The Town Clerk repeated his explanation about the difference between a personal interest and a prejudicial interest and that that it was up to individual councillors to decide which was appropriate to them.

viii) St. Mary's church had agreed to participate in the D Day beacon event and to provide the refreshments at and the costs reimbursed by the council Town Council.

8. Election of Mayor and Deputy Mayor elect

Cllr Mike Kermode proposed Cllr Val Simmons as Mayor elect which was seconded by Cllr Arwel Roberts. **Resolved.**

As regards the Deputy Mayor position, there were two nominations:

Cllr Arwel Roberts proposed Cllr Ivor Beech which was seconded by Cllr Ann Davies.

Cllr Gareth Rowlands proposed Cllr Jackie Burnham which was seconded by Cllr Val Simmons. Members were reminded that the usual practice was that voting would be done through a secret ballot. **Resolved.**

The ballot's result was 7-4 in favour of Cllr Jackie Burnham. **Resolved.**

Members gave their congratulations to Cllr Burnham and commiserations to Cllr Beech. It was noted that it was good to see that there was enough interest in the role to warrant a ballot by two very worthy candidates.

9. Correspondence from:

a. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor Reports

The Mayor had circulated his report prior to the meeting and offered the opportunity to Members for any questions.

Then the Mayor asked Cllr Ann Davies to provide an update from the County Library Task and Finish group meeting. Cllr Davies summarised what had been discussed. The next meeting of this group is to be in June and Members were invited to nominate a Town Council representative for that meeting. Cllr Gareth Rowlands proposed Cllr Mike Kermode, seconded by Cllr Ivor Beech. **Resolved.**

The Deputy Mayor had circulated her report mentioning particularly an email from the local MP on the Arriva bus issue at Tweedmill, which she had circulated. Cllr Simmons noted the success of the Library Easter egg hunt and the good relationship reports from local residents with the operatives of the Ffordd Ganol/Nant gas-main works. Cllr Simmons was thanked for her continued good work on the Arriva bus issue.

Both reports were accepted

b. The Town Clerk & Town Plan update.

The Town 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.

Elements of the report were discussed - in particular:-

- Positive feedback from Rhuddlan Scout Group about the Town Council's hard work for the community and from a new resident regarding how much they are enjoying living in Rhuddlan.
- One Voice Wales information regarding a Community Cushion device that aids the support of people who may have fallen. Costs will be obtained for the next meeting so Members can consider acquiring one, along with information on how people can access to the device.
- Email circulated to Members regarding the Youth Service's activities.
- The next Community Market is Saturday 13th April and Members were encouraged to attend if possible. A raffle in support of the MS Society will be undertaken.
- Council's street trading licence has been received for the Gwledd Fest.

10. County Councillor Reports

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

He voiced his pleasure on hearing that residents do appreciate the efforts of Town Council. A new date for the next litter picking will be circulated soon.

Cllr Roberts voiced his hopes for a potential twinning with Carlow in the Republic of Ireland after his visit there for the Pan Celtic Festival over Easter. Cllr Gareth Rowlands proposed that twinning should be placed on a future meeting agenda. Seconded by Cllr Roberts. **Resolved.**

The report was accepted

Cllr Ann Davies verbally updated Members on her recent County Council work. This included information that a DCC officer is preparing an update on the Rhuddlan Active

Travel Plan, the successful works to reduce the flooding on the New Road roundabout, and her observations on the DCC Social Services and Education department cuts.

The report was accepted

11. Bus Shelter Cleaning

The Town Clerk had circulated the results of the tender. He had received four responses for a specified initial deep clean followed by a quarterly deep clean. There followed a short discussion on the Town Clerk's recommendation and Cllr Gareth Rowlands proposed that company A is engaged, seconded by Cllr Val Simmons. **Resolved.**

12. CCTV Partnership

The Town Clerk had circulated a copy of the contract for Members information noting that this was a 3-year contract and that Rhuddlan Town Council can exit the partnership by giving 6 months' notice. The current representatives to the partnership are Cllrs Bleddyn Williams, Ivor Beech, and Arwel Roberts. Cllr Ivor Beech proposed that the contract agreement be supported, seconded by Cllr Bleddyn Williams. **Resolved.**

13. Planning

No new applications received

14. Budget & Finance Matters

a. Grant Applications had been received from

i) Rhuddlan Bowling Club – Cllrs Arwel Roberts and Mike Elgin both declared an interest and left the meeting. The question of previous Council grants was raised and the club's bank balance information was noted. The Town Clerk was asked to analyse the Council's support over the last 3 years and report back to the next meeting. **Resolved.** Cllrs Roberts and Elgin then returned to the meeting.

ii) National Eisteddfod – a circular request application asking for a donation to the 2024 Rhondda Cynon Taff eisteddfod, no sum highlighted. The debate centred on the Council's past support for national eisteddfod events and Cllr Gareth Rowlands proposed that this grant application be not supported, which was seconded by Cllr Ann Davies. An amendment was made by Cllr Arwel Roberts for a £50 donation, which led to another amendment by Cllr Bleddyn Williams for a £100 donation, this was seconded by Cllr Ivor Beech. The second amendment was carried. **Resolved.**

iii) Marie Currie – a circular request application for a donation, again with no sum highlighted. During the discussion several Members noted the support this charity has provided to local residents. Cllr Ann Davies proposed that £1,000 be donated, seconded by Cllr Mike Kermode. **Resolved.**

b) Payments List - The Town Clerk in a response to a Members query, informed Members that the payments list was time orientated due to Council wanting to pay invoices in a timely fashion once received. Although it is complete when sent out the Friday before a Council meeting, more invoices are often received later on which

needed dealing with and so are added in the intervening days. The list was then proposed for payment by Cllr Gareth Rowlands, seconded by Cllr Arwel Roberts. **Resolved.**

c) To approve and appoint DCC as Town Council's internal auditor – Following a meaningful debate of using alternative providers, the advantages and disadvantages of using DCC, and the fact that our external audit is undertaken by Wales Audit Members were happy to approve and appoint DCC as the internal auditor for another year. Proposed by Cllr Val Simmons, seconded by Arwel Roberts. **Resolved.**

d) To receive the End of Year Accounts – Members had been circulated the account information and informed that the documentation had now been completed ready for the internal audit. Cllr Mike Kermode proposed the accounts be approved, seconded by Cllr Bleddyn Williams. **Resolved.**

15. Community Matters

i) Cllr Val Simmons had received complaints about the disabled parking space in the High Street, it needed repainting by DCC. Cllr Arwel Roberts as a County Councillor had previously asked for this action to be undertaken but will ask again.

ii) Cllr Arwel Roberts wished the Mayor well with his charity concert on Saturday.

iii) Cllr Reg Davies had received complaints that the Castle was closed over Easter. Members were informed that it was closed by CADW due to extreme weather conditions being forecast.

iv) Cllr Ivor Beech added that the No Man's Land Event at Bodrhyddan Hall had also succumbed to the extreme weather.

v) Cllr Ann Davies wanted Members to know that the planned tree trimming on Rhyl Road by DCC has been postponed as the nesting season has commenced.

16. AGM & Next Full Council Meeting

The Mayor asked Members to consider having two meetings in May, one as the AGM so as to formally appoint the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, appoint committee members and to review standing orders and key policies. This would be followed a week later by a Council business meeting. Seconded by Cllr Jackie Burnham **Resolved.** The AGM will be Thursday 9th May and the business meeting a week later on the 16th.

17. Dates of next meetings – 16/4/2024 Events Committee at 7.30pm 9/5/2024 AGM at 7pm 16/5/2024 Full Council Meeting at 7pm

Signed Cllr Mike Kermode (Mayor)