Rhuddlan Town Council – Minutes of the meeting on the 13th June 2024

Hybrid Meeting

Present:
Cllr Val Simmons (Mayor)
Cllr Jackie Burnham (Deputy Mayor)
Cllr Ivor Beech
Cllr Ann Davies (virtual attendance)
Cllr Reg Davies
Cllr Mike Elgin
Cllr Mike Kermode
Cllr Arwel Roberts
Cllr Gareth Rowlands
Cllr Bleddyn Williams (late arrival @ 1905hrs)
Steve Wilson - Town Clerk
Paul Smith - Clerical Assistant/Minute Clerk (virtual attendance)

There were 2 members of the public present and 2 PCSO's
The meeting was recorded from this point (audio only)

1. Apologies
None

2. Declarations of Interest
Cllr Arwel Roberts, Planning.

3. Urgent Matters
The Mayor informed Members of three urgent matters:

a) The resignation of Paul Smith Assistant Clerk under Part 2.
b) Councillors were informed about the vandalised bus shelter.
c) Waste Collection. This item was discussed in an open manner allowing councillors to add their comments to the escalating issues.
d) Cllr Ann Davies updated members regarding an emergency DCC meeting regarding waste collection held that afternoon which concluded with a need for better communications with DCC councillors on the escalating issues. The County Councillors were invited to inform DCC of streets in their ward that had not yet received a waste collection. Cllr Arwel Roberts had provided his list of such streets. Both reiterated an acknowledgment by DCC of the great

pressure they were under to put things right, and an apology for the problems being experienced.

A Member identified concerns that the planning for this change had been ongoing for almost 4 years and was surprised by its inadequacy and questioned had other county councils using "Trolibocs" been consulted with. He added that there appears a gross incompetence regarding the planning and rollout of the changes and stated that this and increased council tax, cuts to library open hours and proposed closure of public toilets serves only to raise a feeling of "no confidence" in DCC and the CEO. Cllr Mike Elgin proposed that a letter expressing the Town Council's anger at these issues be sent to the CEO. Seconded by Mike Kermode. **Resolved.**

Members then continued to discuss this issue by noting that the registration for an Absorbent Hygiene Products (AHP) bin has been closed till September, the lack of forms being made available residents requiring assisted collections, and the operatives not aware of who needs such a service.

A Member of the public was invited to ask a question about putting away bins not collected till the next scheduled collections day so as to ease pavement access for residents. They were informed they could.

4. Police Matters

PCSO's Alex Jones and Ben Hamsworth reported that a suspect for the bus shelter vandalism has been identified and spoken to and had no other incidents to report. The suspected drug dealing at the back of the library has been investigated several times and no evidence has been seen.

A councillor enquired about a road traffic accident at the end of Highlands Road, the PCSO's present had no detail on this as the traffic officer's deal with this type of incident.

The Council informed the officers of the Picnic in the Park event on August 3rd between 11am and 4pm and asked that a police presence be provided on the day.

A councillor asked if there was to be any increased patrols at lunchtime and early evenings in Rhuddlan and offices responded with a no.

Another question was asked regarding public access to the police station to report incidents. The officers stated the station was not a "manned" station so there is no public access as such. This can be done at Rhyl station though or via 101.

The officers were thanked for their attendance, then left the meeting.

A Member asked the Clerk to repeat our request for a written report prior to the meeting. **Resolved.**

5a. Minutes of Town Council meeting held on 16th May 2024.

A member identified a missing reference to a crashed car at the Nature Reserve. Subject to this being added Cllr Gareth Rowlands proposed the amended Minutes be approved, seconded by Cllr Mike Kermode**. Resolved.** The minutes were duly signed by the Mayor.

b. Minutes of AGM 9th May 2024

The Minutes were proposed as a true record by Cllr Mike Kermode, seconded by Cllr Arwel Roberts. **Resolved** The minutes were duly signed by the Mayor.

6. Progress Report from both Minutes

i) The Hwb recycling bins will be implemented on receipt of new waste bins ordered from DCC.

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ii) The road safety poster competition winners are to be presented with their prizes on a Friday at the school celebration service, a date is to be agreed. A banner of all the winning designs is to be created, and members agreed that a selection of sweets be offered to all the school pupils for participating so everyone gets something. **Resolved.**
The shelters are yet to be painted with the winning designs.
iii) The Clerk read through the community matters progress and Members heard that the various flower beds had been reported, and the Welsh language plaque for Admiral's Field ordered.

7. Correspondence from:

a. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor Reports

The Mayor reported that the last month was a busy one and confirmed she had attended the Library Group meeting on 12th June.

The Deputy Mayor verbally added their attendance at the Events Committee meeting on 11th June.
Also mentioned were details regarding a foraging event at the nature reserve. Advertising was poor and Cllr Burnham had contacted the organiser to see if another event could be held in the future, and would be asking the events committee to potentially support it and link it to Council's biodiversity work.
Both reports were accepted

At this point a Member wished the Minutes to record the Councils thanks to those who assisted with the beacon transportation to and from the church.

b. Town Clerk Report

- Any Member wishing to attend the Virtual Youth Engagement Summit on 18th July should inform the Clerk and the cost of £65 be met. **Resolved.**
- DCC Biodiversity Office has asked the Council to participate in a project to increase pollinator habitat. It was proposed by Cllr Jackie Burnham that the offer be taken up, seconded by Cllr Gareth Rowlands. **Resolved.**
- The Clerk had received an email from the UK Parliament for support for a campaign to improve the safety of lithium batteries. After a short discussion Members agreed to invite the representative to the September meeting to discuss the issues. **Resolved.**
- The Spiritualist Church emailed about the Council supporting the need for a road directional sign. Cllr Mike Kermode proposed that Council supports the sign provision in principle as long as it will be bilingual but does not pay any of the costs. Seconded by Cllr Jackie Burnham. **Resolved.**
- A request from the youth club for a bike rack at the Hwb. Cllr Mike Kermode proposing this is provided, seconded by Cllr Gareth Rowlands. **Resolved**.
- Following a resident complaint about the state of the BT building in Gwindy Street, Members agreed to formally write to BT to inform them of these concerns. **Resolved.**
- The youth service has offered to carry out some outreach work with older teens following some ASB in Rhuddlan, and invited the police to attend youth club to discuss such issues.
- A request from a resident in Admiral's Walk to cut back a tree over-hanging adjacent to their property. It was proposed by Cllr Gareth Rowlands that Council investigates

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the issue and then make a decision whether to carry out any works. Seconded by Cllr Jackie Burnham. **Resolved.**

Members also agreed that the Clerk and Mayor be delegated to make the decision and undertake any works necessary. **Resolved.**

8. County Councillor Reports

Cllr Ann Davies had circulated a written report adding that the county wide Active Travel project is to be discussed at county level on 1st July 2024, and the speed survey in the Highlands Road area is now in place. A Member reminded Councillors that Town Council had decided that if any Active Travel project is to be continued in Rhuddlan Sustrans & DCC must undertake further consultation with the school and residents. DCC have requested a Road Safety meeting in the near future and have been offered two dates in July. All Members can attend.

The report was accepted

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

- The Parliament car park surface issues are to be investigated by DCC and the pothole has already been filled.
- A planning site meeting for the Church Gate planning application is to be held tomorrow at 10am. One Town Councillor can attend along with our two County Councillors. Members nominated Cllr Gareth Rowlands to represent Town Council. **Resolved.**
- Cllr Roberts wished to reiterate his congratulations to Bespoke Events and councillors who volunteered their assistance for the very successful Gwledd.
- The AHP bin registration applications have now closed until September 2024 but those who need the service can place such waste in the non-recyclable bin during the interim period.
- A Member reminded the meeting that the Japanese knotweed issue Cllr Roberts reminded members it is the responsibility of NRW.
- The Mayor asked about the commuted sum mentioned in the report. It was suggested that a £50,000 106 Agreement payment might be available soon due to The Rise development. Any decision on what it was used for would be made by DCC although a £5,000 sum was mentioned towards Rhuddlan open spaces.
- Comment was made about the foraging event the Deputy Mayor had reported previously and she proposed that a foraging event be organised by Town Council at a cost of £450, seconded by Cllr Arwel Roberts. **Resolved.** Cllr Gareth Rowlands suggested that before a decision be made this should be discussed with the nature reserve volunteers at tomorrow's meeting.
- **The report was accepted**

9. Minutes of the Library & Museum Working Group held on 14th May, and the 12th June 2024

The meeting of the 14th May nominated Cllr Gareth Rowlands as Chair. **Resolved**

Both Minutes were proposed as true records by Cllr Arwel Roberts, seconded by Cllr Mike Kermode. **Resolved.**

Cllr Gareth Rowlands then took Members through both Minutes including:-

i) Creating a book of library users feedback and a library prospectus

ii) Request that DCC Property Services officers support the development on the initial plans and costs, if not, then Town Council will need to fund this activity.

iii) The Mayor had visited Rhyl library and museum.

iv) Mention was made of whether a County Heritage Officer still remained in post.

v) Noted the need to ask CADW what facilities are required in any future museum.

10. Minutes of the Events Committee meeting held on 11th June 2024

The Minutes were proposed as a true record of the meeting by Cllr Mike Kermode, seconded by Cllr Gareth Rowlands. **Resolved.**

Gwledd entrance and vendors fees were discussed along with the difficulty experienced in collecting the fees and expensive costs of providing cashless payment. Cllr Val Simmons proposed that the entrance be free but vendor fees raised to ensure a more economically feasible event, seconded by Cllr Mike Kermode. This had been resolved by the committee, and endorsed by Full Council tonight. **Resolved.**

Cllr Mike Kermode informed Members on how the Gwledd originated and had progressed significantly to now using a commercial event's organiser, Bespoke Events. A tendering process of 2019 had taken place to get to this stage of undertaking. This organiser had once again served the Council well this year and the Clerk is confident that Standing Orders will allow Council to engage Bespoke Events for another year without a tendering process. Cllr Mike Kermode so proposed, seconded by Cllr Mike Elgin. This had also been resolved by the committee, and endorsed by Full Council tonight. **Resolved.**

A grant applicant was struggling to complete our form with certain details. This was for the Behind the Gate celebration at Pengwern Farm in September. Whilst Members were in favour of offering support it was difficult to progress this further without the necessary application form. Following a lengthy discussion Members agreed to sponsor the celebration event with £500, but precise detail of what was being sponsored would be required. The Council could then fund the sponsored item directly. **Resolved**

11. Public Toilets

The Interim Public Toilet Strategy had been circulated for Members to prepare a formal response to DCC by 5th July.

The Clerk informed Members of our neighbouring Councils decisions so far regarding public toilets in their towns.

Documentation from DCC stated costs associated with running the toilets of £3,055 per annum .

Concern was voiced over Town Council over committing themselves financially to provide County Council activities and the value for money of the related costs. Similarly, the potential of the costs increasing in future years was identified as a risk.

A Member had investigated the use of a "Portaloo" facility with an estimated cost of £35 a week with a weekly clean.

Members asked the Clerk get a confirmed detail of what DCC costs entail and consider a contract that would not increase above inflation.

It was noted that any businesses opening their toilets for public use could receive £500 pa. Cllr Mike Kermode proposed that Council ask local businesses if they would, seconded by Cllr Jackie Burnham. **Resolved.**

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12. Road Safety concerns

Cllr Mike Elgin noted that speeding on Highlands Road was still an issue and a speed survey has been requested in addition to data from council SIDS. The Road Safety committee had also sent a referral to GoSafe.

A Member asked when the Rhyl Road SID was to be repaired. The Clerk will get an update from DCC.

13. Planning

44/2024/1000/PF – Change of use of a ground floor office at Morris-Evans opticians to form a single self-contained flat. No objections.

14. One Voice Wales Conference Wednesday 3rd July 2024

Confirmation Cllr Val Simmons and the Clerk will attend.

15. Budget & Finance Matters

a. Receive & Approve the internal audit report of 2023/24 accounts and the AGAR

The Clerk having previously circulated the report informed Members of the high assurance rating given by the council's internal auditor. Cllr Mike Kermode proposed the acceptance and approval of the audit report and signing of the AGAR, seconded by Cllr Arwel Roberts. **Resolved.**

This report will now be forwarded to the external auditor and the legal notice will be displayed on the council's notice board regarding the opportunity to view the councils accounts and associated paperwork.

The original audit documentation (AGAR) was signed by the then Mayor Cllr Mike Kermode and the Clerk post approval by Full Council.

b. Grant requests

None received

c. Receive quarterly accounts

There being no issues Cllr Arwel Roberts proposed the accounts be received and approved. Seconded by Cllr Gareth Rowlands. **Resolved.**

d. Payment List approval

A Member reminded Members of the River & Sea Sense charity application issues Members decided as the application did not match what the funds were to be used for. It was proposed the applicant be asked to resubmit a new application. Cllr Mike Kermode proposed, seconded by Cllr Gareth Rowlands. **Resolved.**

Given this change in the payments list to exclude River & Sea Sense Cllr Gareth Rowlands proposed the list be approved, seconded by Cllr Mike Kermode. **Resolved**.

16. Community Matters

- The Mayor reported the High Street disabled car parking space had been repainted by DCC but thought the sign was not large enough. Clerk to contact DCC to request a larger sign.
- Cllr Jackie Burnham identified resident concerns regarding seagull attacks. This was discussed by Members and it was decided to have a specific meeting to review NRW's seagull guidance notes and report back to the council Proposed by Cllr Gareth Rowlands and seconded by Cllr Jackie Burnham. **Resolved.**

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- Cllr Reg Davies noted the area of the Knights was very untidy. Members observed that DCC do strim this area but there is no hand work done. Other Members adding that this is also the case near the library. The Clerk was asked to contact DCC to resolve.
- Cllr Arwel Roberts shared a resident's complaint regarding access when football is taking place at Admiral's Field. Members were sympathetic and had installed no parking signs around the field to discourage parking. Historically this had always been a football field and members had no further ideas as to how Council might help. Secondly, the youth club had offered an open invitation to Members to visit the club. Thirdly, another litter pick is scheduled for 15th June.
- Cllr Mike Elgin reported that the Council's speed gun had been found and can be used in the future
- Cllr Ann Davies chased up the installation of a directional toilet sign on the Rhyl Road entrance to Admiral's Field. The Clerk is already working this request and will chase a response off DCC. Cllr Davies also mentioned that a resident had been told they couldn't park in the car park adjacent to the MUGA. The Clerk reported that there was no restrictions.

17. 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. Proposed by Cllr Arwel Roberts to move to part 2 and seconded by Cllr Gareth Rowlands.

The recording was switched off and Members of the public asked to leave

The Mayor informed Members of the resignation received from Paul Smith the Assistant Clerk due to health reasons. The letter of resignation was read for Members information with Paul's concent.
There then followed kind words about Paul's work from the Mayor on behalf of the Council, and several members who had known and worked with Paul over the years for which he showed his appreciation.

Cllr Mike Kermode then proposed that the Personnel Committee meet to discuss Paul's replacement. This was seconded by Cllr Gareth Rowlands. **Resolved.**

18. Date of next meeting – 11/7/2024 Full Council Meeting 7pm

Signed ……..Cllr Val Simmons (Mayor)

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