



Rhuddlan Town Council – Minutes of the meeting on the 14th March 2024

Hybrid Meeting

Present:

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

There were 3 members of the public present - Tony Hepton and Wayne Hughes from Rhuddlan Town FC, Dean Martin from St Asaph FC.

1. Apologies

Cllr Reg Davies

The meeting was recorded from this point (audio only)

2. Declaration of Interest

Cllr Arwel Roberts Planning agenda item 14 & Admirals Field agenda Item 7.

Cllr Mike Kermode, Jackie Burnham, Mike Elgin, and Gareth Rowlands Admirals Field agenda Item 7.

3. Urgent Matters

Where there any? I recall Mike K suggesting public toilets but don't have any minute.

4. Police Matters

Inspector Kevin Smith sent his apologies but sent in a crime report. In the last month there had been 70 incidents reported with none seen as significant, and mostly incidents were anti-

social behaviour. Members were instructed to direct any residents with issues to report themselves to 101 so as they will be recorded by the police and added to the statistics.

5a. Minutes of Town Council meeting held on 8th February 2024.

There were two minor amendments identified.

Cllr Gareth Rowlands proposed that after the amendments were corrected the Minutes be approved as a true record, seconded by Cllr Mike Kermode. **Resolved.**

Progress Report on the above

- i) DCC Library Service had sent a revised Service Level Agreement which requires some modification as will be reviewed at the April Council meeting.
- ii) Broken SID had gone for repair.
- iii) Awaiting grant decision for Admiral's Field family event.
- iv) Arriva bus issue reference not stopping at Tweedmill, letters sent as requested.
- v) MUGA floodlight overspill been corrected.
- vi) Dog waste bags supply received and placed in library for distribution.
- vii) Members agreed to organise D Day Anniversary event hot drinks and light refreshments. **Resolved.**
- viii) No poster competition response yet from Ysgol Y Castell.

A councillor has investigated any Rhuddlan connected survivor of the D Day landing via the British Legion but the only individual found is too frail to attend.

5b. Minutes of the Road Safety Working Group held on 7th February 2024

Proposed as a true record by Cllr Mike Elgin, seconded by Cllr Val Simmons. **Resolved.**

6. Admiral's Field Reconsideration of February in principle decision

The Mayor welcomed the representatives of Rhuddlan Town and St Asaph City Football clubs. The Town Council meeting of 8th February 2024 agreed in principle to allow Rhuddlan Town FC use of Admiral's Field subject to receiving further information as minuted.

In accordance with the Council's Standing Orders 7(a) and (b) reference previous resolutions, six councillors felt that this decision was done without full consideration of all aspects especially the field community ownership and use included in the property conveyance of 1946.

The conveyance states "The Council shall hold...the land hereby assured..... For the purpose of a public recreation ground for the said parish of Rhuddlan".

As a result, the Clerk was requested to draft a report summarising the benefits and risks to facilitate a debate on the proposal.

The DCC Monitoring Officer has advised that those councillors making a declaration of interest of a personal interest over issues such as the proximity of their properties or membership of other organisations can debate and vote on this issue providing, they considered their interest a non-prejudicial interest.

Rhuddlan Town FC representatives then presented their comments and aspirations for the use of Admiral's Field with a support from St Asaph FC on how they use their ground and potential funding opportunities via the Welsh Football Association.

There then followed a thorough and lengthy debate in which all views were aired including a 2019 consultant's report on the community use of Admiral's Field, legal advice taken on the 1946 conveyance of the land, conforming to the Councils Standing Orders, and advice from the DCC Monitoring officer.

Cllr Mike Elgin proposed that Admiral's Field must be retained for the "purpose of public recreation" as described in the 1946 conveyance and Rhuddlan Town FC request be therefore denied. Seconded by Cllr Gareth Rowlands.

Further debate then ensued on an issue of historical use of the field and concerns of comparing the St Asaph scenario with Rhuddlan.

An amendment from Cllr Bleddyn Williams was proposed that if Rhuddlan Town FC use is denied Town Council support them with finding another location with a budget line of £50,000. **Don't know who seconded this, did you note it? The amendment was defeated.**

At this point Cllr Ann Davies proposed another amendment that the discussion be postponed whilst further up to date legal advice is sought. **This received no seconder.**

In returning to the original proposal by Cllr Elgin, the Mayor requested a recorded vote which was 6 for and 4 in favour of the proposal. **Resolved.** The six in favour were Cllrs Mike Elgin, Mike Kermode, Gareth Rowlands, Jackie Burnham, Arwel Roberts and Val Simmons. The four that voted against were Cllrs Ann Davies, Robert Williams, Ivor Beech and Bleddyn Williams. A copy of the 2019 consultant's report on the Rhuddlan Community Amenities in relation to Admiral's Field by shared with Rhuddlan Town FC. **Resolved**

7. Correspondence from:

a. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor Reports

The Mayor had circulated his report prior to the meeting and asked if any member had any questions. In particular he mentioned the latest community market success and suggested to Members that they might consider the market as a good opportunity to meet and get to know local residents. Adding that he had received positive comments on the Town Plan but one concern on the timescales.

The report was accepted

The Deputy Mayor had also circulated her report and in particular updated Members on the Arriva buses not stopping at Tweedmill and the help received from the MP, MS, and DCC Cabinet Member for Transport Barry Mellor. Although not an Arriva priority they will review the situation in the future. Cllr Simmons was congratulated on her work on this issue.

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:-

- Cllr Mike Elgin as the town's representative on North Wales Tourism asked if the Council would like to invite the CEO Jim Jones to one of our future meetings. **Resolved.**
- An email asking questions about any future Town Council plans for the land adjacent to the Knights statues. Members were reminded of previous advice not to pursue any plans for this area and they agreed to continue with that advice. **Resolved.**
- Email questioning if Town Council can action anything to tidy up the land near the church known as the piggery. The land is in private ownership and Town Council has no powers to act.
- Members were made aware of the DCC closure of public toilets report being discussed at scrutiny earlier today. Cllr Ann Davies as a County Councillor commented that nothing had been decided and it is to be returned to scrutiny at a later date. Any closure would go against DCC corporate goals but is not a statutory service. Members agreed to write a letter opposing any potential closures. **Resolved.**

8. County Councillor Reports

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

In particular Members discussed the item on the New Rd drainage problem and its proximity to the town ditch, Ffordd Ffrainc (A5151) drains to be cleared in the near future, and there is to be another litter pick on March 16th focused on the river bank with an officer of Tidy Wales in attendance. The later caused some concern about the high tides this weekend and the need to be vigilant and the requirement of a risk assessment.

The report was accepted

Cllr Ann Davies verbally updated Members of the damaged fencing near the Golf Club roundabout being repaired successfully by DCC, potholes being repaired in accordance with the guideline pothole measurements by DCC, and information that the Ffordd Ganol gas works will make good the ground after completion.

The report was accepted

9. Library & Museum Working Group

The Mayor in referring to the circulated document asked if Members accepted the terms of reference for the working group, which they confirmed they did. **Resolved.**

Members were then asked if they were approved the formation of a working group. They were and Cllr Gareth Rowlands proposed the working group be created, seconded by Cllr Val Simmons. **Resolved.**

In consideration of the group membership it was proposed by Cllr Arwel Roberts that Cllrs Gareth Rowlands, Val Simmons, Mike Kermode, and Ivor Beech be put forward for this task. Seconded by Cllr Val Simmons. **Resolved.**

Cllr Ann Davies as County Councillor informed Members that DCC had set up a county wide library discussion group and suggested that Rhuddlan send a representative. Members had not received any information on this group and needed to determine if

it was relevant to Rhuddlan and DCC Library service partnership. Cllr Davies was asked to forward information on this county wide group for consideration. **Resolved.**

10. DCC Waste Recycling Changes

The Clerk had circulated information for Members on the new “trolibocs” system of waste collection due to start in 2024. This included delivery dates for the new bins and a statement that a leaflet drop to all properties will be carried out.

It was noted that those with mobility problems can apply to be included in an assisted collection and anyone requiring this type of collection have to be make DCC aware.

11. Rhuddlan Community Group

The Clerk had circulated a request from the Rhuddlan Community Group for Council’s approval for the creation of a Covid memorial garden within an area of Admiral’s Field close to Admiral’s Walk and Hendre Close. This is to replace the original memorial garden at Vicarage Lane playing fields in memory of Rhuddlan residents who lost their lives during the Covid pandemic and in recognition of the front line pandemic workers. Their suggestion is to plant two flowering cherry trees, bulbs, the original plaque, and a refurbishment of the current planter on site.

The two benches that have to be removed from the Town Ditch be placed between the outdoor gym and the football pitch facing Rhyl Rd.

Members agreed to the request. **Resolved.**

12. Dog Waste Special Meeting 6th March

Cllr Arwel Roberts reported back to Members on ideas regarding the reduction of this issue. These included:-

- Requesting CCTV operator to monitor any incidents of dog fouling in the Service Level Agreement
- Engagement of dog walkers to identify problems
- Seek better designed dog bag dispensers – challenge Meifod wood products to design something suitable.
- Paint spray the deposited faeces to encourage dog owners to pick it up.
- Use stickers to remind dog walkers that the waste can be placed in the litter bins.
- Publicise enforcement needed as DCC have no enforcement officers anymore.

This was discussed by members who agreed with the proposed actions. **Resolved.**

13. Planning

The Clerk took Members through the applications received.

Cllr Arwel Roberts declared an interest as he is a member the DCC planning committee.

44/2023/0874 – demolition of existing bungalow & garage and erection of two storey dwelling at Edgefield, Eton Park, Rhuddlan. **No objections**

44/2023/0783 – erection of a detached dwelling on land adjacent to the church yard entrance, Church St, Rhuddlan. Members noted this was a resubmission which they originally objected to on the grounds of proximity to the church and lynch gate structures, seen as an overdevelopment in the area, concerns on the impact on local residents, and access issues to the site. After some consideration Members agreed to object again on these grounds. **Object.**

14. Budget & Finance Matters

a. The Mayor & Clerk met with the organisers of the RhuddFest as agreed by Full Council in February due to concerns about supporting a commercial event. This was shared with members,

Cllr Rob Williams declared an interest.

The application asks for £5,000 towards the provision of a Welsh Stage and Council wanted to ascertain whether it might be cancelled if no support was given. They expect around 5000 people to attend and their total costs would be around £70,000. The application was discussed by members and Cllr Mike Elgin proposed that no grant be approved given that public funds would be supporting a commercial event. Seconded by Cllr Ann Davies. **Resolved.**

b. A Member noted that the planters at the end of New Rd are making cutting the nearby hedge difficult. Following a short discussion Cllr Mike Kermode proposed writing to DCC stating the hedge contractors concerns, and given the planters distressed state of repair Town Council requests that it be removed. **Resolved**

The Clerk noted that the MUGA light upgrade had cost £9212.36 providing a saving from the £10,000 budget.

Council's insurance premium is as last years.

A Member shared a concern about the regular payment for the website and social media contract. The Clerk stated that it was a legal requirement for Council to have a website and that the existing contractor's performance had deteriorated so he was investigating doing it himself. Findings would be reported to the IT and Communications Committee.

The Payments list was then proposed for payment by Cllr Gareth Rowlands, seconded by Cllr Arwel Roberts. **Resolved.**

c. Review & Approve the Council's financial regulations - must be undertaken to comply with our Internal Audit. The Clerk read through the changes being proposed which included the submission date for the precept to DCC. Cllr Arwel Roberts so proposed accepting the changes, seconded by Cllr Gareth Rowlands. **Resolved.**

d. Salary Standing Orders will now appear on the April Council meeting for approval as the new salary points will commence in April.

Members thanked the Clerk for his excellent work on the above matters.

15. Community Matters

Cllr Jackie Burnham had reported previous to the meeting that a child had entrapped themselves within the Admirals Field playground fencing on Tuesday evening, and the fire service were present to remove them by bending one of the vertical metal fence

struts. No more detail was known. The assistant clerk had visited the site this morning and had noted some slight fence damage, and was instructed to engage Brian Jackson to repair which had now been actioned. In response to a Members observation he stated that there is a RoSPA guideline for the gap between the vertical struts and this fence conforms to that guidance.

Cllr Ivor Beech passed on concerns from local businesses about the new waste collection service commencing in June 2024. It was noted that leaflets had been circulated by DCC and Members discussed the fact that businesses can tender for this service from a licensed waste collector of their choice. As the Town Council is rated as a business we will review our current contract for waste collection with DCC when it expires.

Cllr Arwel Roberts had informed the Community Centre of this new waste collection service and made DCC Officer aware.

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.

The audio recording was stopped.

16. To receive the Minutes of the Personnel Committee held on February 7th 2024

The Mayor verbally reported the Minutes of the meeting with special reference to the Clerks appraisal, and the Job Descriptions for the Clerk and Assistant Clerk review to widen the job remit if Council should determine it's needed in the future. The Minutes were accepted. **Resolved**

The Clerk took the opportunity to remind Members that there is to be three biodiversity training events, in April, July, and September 2024. The April training will be on the theme of awareness. Members agreed to hold the training at 6.30pm **Resolved.**

17. Date of next meeting – 11/4/2024 6.30pm for biodiversity awareness training 11/4/2024 Full Council Meeting 7pm

SignedCllr Mike Kermode (Mayor)