



Rhuddlan Town Council – Minutes of the meeting on the 13th July 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
Cllr Bleddyn Williams
Town Clerk
Clerical Assistant/Minute Clerk

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

Also present were Joe Lunn from Healthy Prestatyn Iach (HPI), Alison Kemp from Betsi Cadwalladr University Health Board (BCUB), The Mayor of Prestatyn & Meliden and his Consort and 2 members of the public. Gareth Davies MS arrived at the start of item 4.

1. Apologies

Cllr Ann Davies, James Davies MP and Llyr Gruffydd MS.

2. Declaration of Interest

Cllr Mike Kermode noted that some councillors may be patients at Rhuddlan surgery but that he felt that this did not prevent them from participating in the discussions on item 4.

3. Urgent Matters

None

4. Prestatyn/Rhuddlan Iach

Cllr Mike Kermode welcomed Joe Lunn and Alison Kemp and thanked them for attending the meeting. Councillors had heard concerns from residents that are patients with Healthy Prestatyn Iach (HPI) on a number of issues, especially the retention of an adequate number of G.P.s, the arrangements for making appointments and services for people with diabetes. These concerns were shared with the representatives from HPI and Betsi Cadwallader

University Hospital Board (BCUB) and they had agreed to come along to the Town Council's meeting to respond to them.

The meeting heard of a number of positive steps that were being taken to address the concerns raised. In terms of the number of G.P.s it was recognised that there is a national shortage and that recruitment into North Wales can often be a problem. This is being addressed by measures such as links with other local surgeries and a programme to relocate doctors from hospitals to G.P. surgeries to address the balance between primary and secondary health care services. Additional G.P. training will be provided in North Wales, although this is a longer-term solution to the problem. It was mentioned that people did not always need to be seen by a G.P. because a range of services are being provided by the Nurse Practitioners and other health specialists in the team. It was also mentioned that there are still problems from the Covid pandemic in terms of increased demand and a backlog of regular checkups for people with chronic conditions.

The appointments system was discussed and it was explained that there are a number of options available for people to use. It was recognised that making phone-based appointments could be difficult at times and it was hoped that if more people were able to use the web-based systems then this would release more phone access time for those people that found it difficult to use the web-based ones. A call-back facility is available. All appointment requests are triaged to ensure that they are prioritised correctly.

In terms of services for people with diabetes, it was explained that these are focussed at the Seabank Road Surgery so as to provide a full range of treatments and support in one location rather than at different sites.

The Mayor conveyed the thanks of the Town Council to Joe Lunn and Alison Kemp for their attendance and answers to the issues raised. Although there appears little that the Town Council can do to assist with health matters it was good to have the informative discussion and Councillors could pass on the information to residents.

5. Police Matters

No representatives attended the meeting and no report had been supplied.

6. Minutes

Town Council Meeting 8th June 2023

The Minutes were proposed as a true record by Cllr Arwel Roberts, seconded by Cllr Bleddyn Williams. **Resolved.**

The minutes were duly signed.

7. Progress Report from Minutes

The Clerk provided an update on the following items:

- a. **Admiral's Field new gates** – 1 quote has been received and a further 2 are awaited.

- b. **Barrfield Road** - issue of untidy land and fly tipping has been successfully actioned by Scottish Power.
- c. **Rhuddlan FC** – letter sent as requested but no response received.
- d. **Twinning** – item moved to September agenda.
- e. **Princes Road Toilets** – DCC have reported that the toilets are cleaned daily to the correct standard.
- f. **LDP Candidate Sites** – The Mayor asked Members to provide any comments on local sites they may have to be forwarded to the Clerk to collate into a Town Council response.

8. Correspondence from:

a. The Mayor

The Mayor had circulated his report prior to the meeting.

Included was a report from the Deputy Mayor and the Mayor voiced his gratitude for the assistance.

Both reports were accepted

b. The Town Clerk and 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:

- Email requesting the Council replace the planters on Parliament/High Street post September at a cost of £425 each. Members agreed to review the request in September. **Resolved.**
- A Member stated he had identified a broken “silent soldier”. Members discussed replacing it with the last spare one. Cllr Jackie Burnham proposed that this be actioned and if another is broken the council will then decide whether to purchase any more. Seconded by Cllr Arwel Roberts. **Resolved.**
- Resident complaint about a large sycamore tree located in Vicarage Lane playing field impacting on their property. The Mayor and Clerk had visited the complainant and suggested three options of moving forward with the associated costs. Following a short discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Jackie Burnham, seconded by Cllr Gareth Rowlands, that the tree be cut down and replaced with two new trees on the site. **Resolved.**
- Rhuddlan Cubs had asked the Council for a list of local organisations that could offer them volunteering opportunities. One Member reported that they had already assisted at the bowling club. Any ideas to be forwarded to the Clerk.
- Verbal complaints from a resident about issues at Admiral’s Field. One of which was a youth urinating against a tree. Members hoped the recent opening of the public toilets at the Hwb would help and noted the remaining complaints.
- A resident emailed that the social distancing posters had not been removed from all the lampposts. Reported to DCC and the Clerk offered to identify remaining ones and ask DCC to remove them.

- Email reference Japanese Knotweed on the river bank. Members noted this is not the responsibility of the Town Council and the Clerk should write to Natural Resource Wales.
- Several project updates were received from the Clerk which included, information that toilet signs highlighting the provision at the Hwb had now been installed. Members discussed the provision of more toilet signs at other strategic positions around the site. It was proposed by Cllr Jackie Burnham that these be enacted, seconded by Cllr Gareth Rowlands. **Resolved.**

The report and project update were accepted

9. County Councillor Reports

Cllr Arwel Roberts had circulated a written report in which he informed Members of discussions held between DCC and Welsh Water to rectify the storm drainage issues around Kerfoot Avenue, Tan Yr Eglwys and Gwindy Street. No response has been relayed to him yet but he is to arrange a meeting with DCC officers to investigate how things can be improved in the future.

A Member who previously owned some land in the area shared information that sections of the land had been flooded in 1994 and he had an agreement with the then Rhuddlan Borough Council as to remedial action at that time, and the ongoing maintenance of it, which does throw some light on the issue.

Following an informative discussion, it was agreed to ask for a site meeting with DCC's Andy Clark, Welsh Water, the Mayor, adjacent residents and interested parties to discuss the 1994 agreement and seek action on the issue. **Resolved.**

The Clerk to supply copies of the 1994 agreement to the above parties. **Resolved.**

The report was accepted

10. Events

a) **Events Committee Minutes held on 20th June 2023.** The Mayor asked those Members of the Committee to confirm the Minutes as a true record. **Resolved.**

Members agreed to the recommendation that Bespoke Fitness & Events be commissioned for the 2024 Gwledd Fest on a funding basis the same as this year. Members were informed that a tendering process will take place for this contract in 2024 to cover the 2025 Gwledd-Fest onwards. **Resolved**

A Member asked that Bespoke Fitness & Events ensure early contact with Menter Iaith next year.

A Member enquired about how the gate collection is recorded so as to be fully transparent on the amount and its account placement. It was agreed that some form of system is required to protect those handling the collection and different forms of security tags or bands are to be investigated. This will be further discussed at the next committee meeting. **Resolved.**

The Clerk had noted an opportunity for grant assistance for the Gwledd Fest next year and will investigate it's suitability and apply if it complies.

The proposed July meeting of the committee was not now required so the next committee meeting will be on 3rd October.

b) **Rhuddlan Castle Archaeological Day.** A Member had enquired if the Council could support entry costs for Rhuddlan children attending this event. The Clerk stated that he had spoken to the Custodian of the Castle and had been informed that all the children from Ysgol y Castell have already been to the castle and participated in very similar activities. Making this offer to other residents would prove difficult for the castle staff to administer. Members noted that the CADW free pass for residents is no longer available. Members agreed to note this discussion and not offer any support.

11. Annual Report Year Ending March 31st 2023

The Mayor for this period, Cllr Mike Elgin, took Members through the report congratulating the Clerk and all the Members for their efforts and support for a very successful year. The Clerk confirmed that all the mandatory requirements are included and if Members are happy to approve it he will post it on the Council's website. Cllr Gareth Rowlands proposed the report be accepted, seconded by Cllr Arwel Roberts.

Resolved

In discussing the report's contents, the Members noted that the Town Plan had proved a useful tool in focusing attention to agreed projects and items. Great progress had been achieved and now members should look at a future plan. Cllr Mike Kermode proposed that meetings be held in September to begin the process of developing the next Town Plan, seconded by Cllr Gareth Rowlands. **Resolved.**

12. Review of Policies

Standing Orders – The Clerk explained the mandatory nature of the policy and asked that Members review and approve it. He added that Councillors cannot change a lot of its contents due to legislation but certain items can be modified. Although it was a lengthy document, it is important that Members understand it and agree the contents. The Mayor suggested that Members form a working group to action a review. Following a short discussion Cllr Gareth Rowlands said he had a few comments to make and proposed that a working group be formed bringing its findings back to Full Council for approval. Seconded by Cllr Ivor Beech. **Resolved**

Members agreed a deadline for comments or ideas for the last Friday in July which is 28th July 2023. **Resolved.**

13. Planning

Cllr Val Simmons as Deputy Mayor took Members through the applications.

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

44/2023/0146 – Bryn Efah, Church St, Rhuddlan for the erection of a pitched roof single storey extension. No objections

44/2023/0327 – 11 Links Avenue. Erection of a flat roof dormer extension to facilitate a loft conversion. No objections

44/2023/0097 – Home Farm, Rhuddlan. Conversion and change of use of agricultural buildings. This application had been previously placed before Council but DCC had now received amended/additional documents for review. No objections.

The Mayor noted that the Town Council had traditionally asked the Deputy Mayor to review and comment on all planning applications at Council meetings. He suggested that there is little reason to continue this practice and he suggested that this role could be passed on to the Clerk. During a short discussion Cllr Mike Kermode proposed that the Clerk now fulfils that role, seconded by Cllr Jackie Burnham. **Resolved.**

14. Budget & Finance

a. **Approval of Internal Audit and accounts post completion of audit** – The Clerk had circulated the Internal Audit as completed by DCC at Town Council's request. The review gave a high assurance rating which means that risks and controls are well managed and objectives are being met. Once Members had approved the audit, and recorded in the minutes, it can then be forwarded to the external auditor. Cllr Arwel Roberts proposed approval of the audit and accounts. Seconded by Cllr Mike Kermode. **Resolved.**

b. **Acceptance of quarterly financial report** – The Clerk presented the quarterly report stating that spend was on track to budget. Cllr Mike Kermode proposed acceptance, seconded by Cllr Gareth Rowlands. **Resolved.**

c. **Grant requests**

i) **Rhuddlan Community Group** requested £1,800 towards plants and other items to assist them with their volunteer work to make Rhuddlan look attractive. Proposed approval by Cllr Arwel Roberts, seconded by Cllr Mike Elgin. **Resolved.** It was noted that the new planters did not show that they had been purchased by the Town Council. It was agreed to have suitable plaques produced that stated this and also mentioned that they were maintained by the Community Group.

ii) **Rhuddlan Community Association** requesting £4,000 as match funding for a Burbo Bank Grant to carry out improvements to the Community Centre. Cllr Reg Davies declared an interest as a Trustee and elected to remain in the room and not contribute to the discussion. The applicant has secured a Burbo Bank grant of £20,000 and they have £2,125 of their own funds towards the total cost of £26,125.

The Mayor reminded members of the decision in the November meeting which said *"that if Council is to give support, then the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and another councillor represent the Council on the Board of Trustees"*. This had been discussed at a meeting with the trustees but there had been a blunt refusal from them to take this on board.

The grant application did not include copies of current bank statements therefore members could progress the application. There was a lengthy debate on the issue but members agreed that the application can only be considered once all the required financial information is provided so as to follow due

process. The Council must remain open and supportive as to how they grant public funds for this project.

After a discussion it was agreed to modify the request for additional representation to be the addition of the Deputy Mayor, in addition to the Mayor. Proposed by Cllr. Mike Elgin, seconded by Cllr Gareth Rowlands.

Resolved

Cllr Mike Kermode proposed that the grant be approved on the condition that the financial information be provided and a second representative be agreed. Cllr Jackie Burnham proposed an amendment that two separate letters be sent to the applicant. The first asking for the second representation within the association and the second stating that a grant can be offered if the required financial information is received. Cllr Bleddyn Williams seconded the amendment. **Resolved.**

iii) **Love North Wales Community Support Ltd** requesting £1,500 to help purchase a second vehicle. No bank statements were provided so the application could not be progressed. Cllr Arwel Roberts proposed approval subject to receiving and reviewing their latest bank statements, seconded by Cllr Jackie Burnham. **Resolved.**

d. **Funding mechanism for Admiral's Field path** – The project working group had received the tenders for the path and have recommended the lowest tender of £89,500. With various grants and commuted sums already in place Town Council require a remaining £22,500 from their own funds. This can be met by two options, from reserves, or a loan from the Public Works Loan Board.

The Clerk explained the implications and any associated costs with both options and asked Members to which option they preferred. There then followed a considered debate on the options with several councillors expressing their views. In conclusion Cllr Arwel Roberts proposed that the Council use £10,000 of reserve funds and apply for a £10,000 loan. The remainder of £2,500 coming from the project budget line. Cllr Mike Kermode proposed an amendment that the council borrow £20,000 from the PWLB be taken over a 5 year period. This was seconded by Cllr Gareth Rowlands and agreed. **Resolved.**

e. **Validate Contractor for Admiral's Field path construction** – tenders had been invited from local companies who are included on the DCC preferred construction companies list. The working Group were recommending contractor 2 at a cost of £89,500. Cllr Gareth Rowlands proposed that the contractor 2 recommendation be approved, and Cllr Mike Kermode seconded the proposal. **Resolved.**

f. **Payments List** – this had been circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr Mike Kermode proposed the list approval, seconded by Cllr Arwel Roberts. **Resolved.**

15. Community Matters

a. Cllr Arwel Roberts had noticed that several bunting securing ties had been left in place and asked that they be removed.

- b. Cllr Ivor Beech commented on the excessive speed of Amazon drivers in local estate roads. Members agreed that the Clerk write to Amazon and PCSO to highlight the issue. **Resolved.**
- c. Cllr Burnham added that the level of the grass one of the wildflower meadows was causing an obstruction to the visibility for drivers – Clerk to report to DCC
- d. Cllr Mike Elgin suggested that a plaque is purchased that will be displayed at the Bowls Club and at other suitable locations, highlighting that RTC supports them – Clerk to sort with Cllr. Elgin.
- e. Cllr Reg Davies enquired about why a lock had been placed on the gate leading to Twt Hill. Clerk was asked to investigate.
- f. Report of some fly tipping in the Parliament Street Car Park – Clerk to report to DCC

Part 2 Exclusion of the Press & Public

By virtue of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and 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 recording of the meeting was switched off.

16. Aelwyn Morgan Award

The Mayor reminded Members that this award was decided by secret ballot and that the nominations had already been circulated. Richard Polden was declared the winner.

17. Date of next meeting – 14/9/2023 Full Council Hybrid Meeting 7pm

Signed.....Cllr Mike Kermode (Mayor)