



Rhuddlan Town Council – Minutes of the meeting on the 10th March 2022
Virtual Meeting during the Covid 19 Restrictions

Present:

Cllr Andrew Smith (Deputy Mayor in the Chair)
Cllr Jackie Burnham
Cllr Reg Davies
Cllr Charlotte Frobisher
Cllr Syd Gaskin
Cllr Mike Kermode
Cllr Arwel Roberts
Cllr Gareth Rowlands
Cllr Bleddyn Williams
Town Clerk
Clerical Assistant/Minute Clerk

1. Apologies

Cllr Ann Davies, no reason given, Cllr Mike Elgin, reason was on holiday.

Members of the public were invited to join the virtual meeting but none had requested to do so. Members were informed that the meeting was being recorded, audio only.

2. Declaration of Interest

None

3. Urgent Matters

The Deputy Mayor informed Members that there were 2 Urgent Matters that had been brought to his attention but which will be considered under Part 2.

He added that there was also a Standing Order matter regarding Members sending apologies and giving a valid reason for their absence and asked the Assistant Clerk to Minute "no reason given" alongside Cllr Ann Davies apology.

Cllr Kermode believed that as Town Council is recording the virtual meeting there was no need to record the reason in the Minutes. Cllr Gareth Rowlands noting that if the Clerk is satisfied with the absence reason then Council does not need to record the reason in the Minutes.

4. Police Matters

PC Wendy Szabo was present at the meeting and was welcomed by the Deputy Mayor. PC Szabo covers Rhuddlan and this is her first attendance at Full Council. She is leaving this role so will pass on information to the new officer for Rhuddlan.

The police report was then discussed including

- Co-op crime problems of fuel theft and shop lifting
- Explanation of the definition of reports, duplication of reports, and crime incidents
- Statement that not all victims of crime want to follow up their initial report
- Information on the Rhuddlan team under a new Community Beat Manager John Dickie

The officer was informed of the Council's forthcoming events and invited the community team to attend. PC Szabo asked for the event details to be e-mailed to her. **Resolved.**

There then followed a meaningful discussion on the legality of e-scooters and the 3-tier approach the Police use to deal with any contraventions of the law as e-scooters are considered a power vehicle under the Road Traffic Act. They are only legal to use on private land with the permission of the land owner. One Member noting that the Town Council cannot act on any such illegal activity as it is the police's responsibility.

Information was given about a Community Alert system and Members asked that a link be sent to the Clerk so Town Council can sign up for alerts. **Resolved.**

Member's then reported incidents of e-scooter contraventions which PC Szabo discussed. It appears she is not aware of the CCTV coverage available in Rhuddlan or the system to use it. Cllr Gareth explained how the system worked, using the police airways, and where the cameras are located.

The Deputy Mayor thanked PC Szabo for her attendance who then left the meeting.

Members were surprised that the officer was unaware of the CCTV coverage and systems. It was agreed that the DCC CCTV Officer Ian Millington be contacted and asked to discuss these issues with POC Szabo. **Resolved.**

5. Minutes

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Subject to two amendments regarding the numbering of items, spelling of Coed y Brain to be altered to Coed Y Brain in Item 8, and punctuation within this item corrected. The Minutes were proposed as a true record by Cllr Mike Kermode seconded by Cllr Arwel Roberts. **Resolved.**

The Minutes were duly signed.

Matters Arising

- a. **Election Brochure** – these have now been printed and will be distributed next week. A Member had attended a DCC Prospective Councillor meeting which was strongly pushing for e-self nominations. Noting that the Town & Community Council results will be given two days after the County Council results. It was agreed that the various dates for nomination etc. be forwarded to Councillors. **Resolved.**

Members wished the Minutes to reflect their thanks to Cllr Mike Kermode for all his hard work in preparing and checking the brochure which was seen as a very

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informative document. Mention was made of the Welsh translation which had been provided by Dafydd Timothy a professional translator, as previously resolved by Council.

- b. **Castle Street Bollards Improvements** – DCC will provide bollards but requested local residents to contact them to confirm installation locations. It was agreed that Cllr Bleddyn Williams to progress this if still needed. **Resolved.**
- c. **One-hour free parking** – A Member asked for an update, which there wasn't. The Clerk stated the Council are awaiting Vicarage Lane car park improvements to be carried out. Members then agreed to ask DCC if the Parliament St car park 1hr free parking could be progressed whilst waiting. Cllr Jackie Burnham proposed and Cllr Andrew Smith seconded. **Resolved.**
In addition, it was noted that the ticket machine is not working. Members agreed that the Clerk contact DCC to resolve the issue. **Resolved.**
- d. **Castle Lighting** – The Clerk had still been unable to contact the custodian but had a new contact to try. It was reported that one of the lights is shining on the floor and not the castle. The Clerk is to report this to the custodian. **Resolved.**
A Member enquired if the Council could become involved as a "joint custodian" and proposed that enquiries be made with CADW. Seconded by Cllr Gareth Rowlands. **Resolved.**
- e. **Community Association Bench Request** – completed
- f. **Farmers Market Support** – The Deputy Mayor proposed that the Council agree to support the market for 6 months by covering the community centre costs. In the following discussion Members acknowledged the issues, however the proposal lacked detail, offered no options, and was presented without prior knowledge. An amendment by Cllr Gareth Rowlands asked that the item be placed on the April agenda with more detail so a thorough review can take place and the implications for the Council understood. This was seconded by Cllr Mike Kermode and the Deputy Mayor withdrew his original proposal. **Resolved.**
- g. **Green Communities Grant** – The Clerk informed Council that all five expressions of interest had been approved to forward for full application totalling £10,000. Adding that consideration of a nature trail within the Rhuddlan Nature Reserve could be put forward which would mean increasing the Town Council's match funding requirement.
Cllr Mike Kermode and Arwel Roberts declared an interest as members of the Management Advisory Group (MAG) for the reserve. The Clerk confirmed that a £20,000 application would result in a further £3,000 of council match funding. Cllr Gareth Rowlands proposed the Council supports the additional match funding for a nature trail, seconded by Cllr Syd Gaskin. **Resolved.**
- h. **Internet Banking** – still progressing, currently awaiting a mandate document from HSBC.
- i. **Translation Costs** – in accordance with the Council's resolution to investigate such costs the Clerk is going out to tender for all formal translations and agreeing a suitable timetable for translation. He was reminded that Menter Iaith could assist.

- j. **Council Meeting Absenteeism** – mentioned earlier under Urgent Matters by the Deputy Mayor. Cllr Mike Kermode stated that an absenteeism clause in the standing Orders was not required as Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 provides a national framework for this issue.

6 Correspondence From

a. The Mayor

Members noted the comprehensive detail provided especially on the Destination Partnership. High Street parking issues were discussed as raised in the report especially the closing of the Little Flowermonger. The Clerk confirmed to Members that a strong letter had been delivered to high street businesses regarding the issue, and that parking enforcement had issued parking tickets recently.

The report was accepted.

b. Town Clerk Correspondence

A letter regarding the Wales library of things. Cllr Arwel Roberts commented the scheme advocated making second hand resources available for use of the public. He hoped could be included in the June meeting after the election.

The Clerk informed Members of the National Association of Local Councils Salary Awards 2021/2022 which would affect Council employee's salary as from April 1st 2021. The Clerk asked the Council to consider that the previous Clerk could be included although now resigned. Cllr Mike Kermode proposed that the previous Clerk should be included in this backpay payment, seconded by Cllr Andrew Smith.

Resolved.

George Wong a town business owner was disappointed he was not included in the awnings project 1st phase. The Clerk confirmed he was now in the 2nd phase

The correspondence was accepted

7. County Councillors Reports

a Cllr Arwel Roberts.

The recent litter pick was very successful and the next one should be at the end of May. Thanks to those who participated and Cllr Jackie Burnham who has been individually litter picking. The equipment is stored in Cllr Roberts shed.

Cllr Roberts also gave thanks to Brian Taylor for his work with supporting the Ukraine crisis and Catherine Timothy from the pharmacy for her donations.

The report was accepted

8. Town Plan Projects Report

The Town Clerk had circulated an update. Members were especially focused on:-

- The Community Centre electrics tender has received one reply so far
- Vicarage Lane car park no progress
- Coed Y Brain external doors installation date is 25th April
- Coed Y Brain gas meter issue persist until the gas market is open again
- Gas fitter will not fit boiler until meter is connected

- Commuted Sums grant application decision likely to be end of March
- Defibrillators in phone kiosks

A Member thanked the Clerk for his hard work on the various projects, and all Councillors for supporting him where they could.

The report was accepted.

9. Minutes of the Jubilee Working Group

The Chair of the group in noting that only himself and Cllr Gareth Rowlands were at the meeting, and are present this evening, proposed that the Minutes are a correct record, Cllr Gareth Rowlands seconded. **Resolved**

Members were then informed of the recommendations for their approval.

The crotchet & craft club were asking the Council for £100 for the cost of materials. Cllr Mike Kermode so proposed, seconded by Cllr Jackie Burnham. **Resolved.**

Purchase of tree for planting to mark the occasion at a cost of £30. Proposed by Cllr Jackie Burnham, seconded by Cllr Mike Kermode. **Resolved.**

Purchase of plaque to mark the tree planting at a cost of £145. Proposed by Syd Gaskin, seconded by Cllr Jackie Burnham. **Resolved.**

Invitation to Sian Mai Jones our previous Clerk to be Council's official Guest of Honour at the beacon lighting. Proposed by Cllr Jackie Burnham, seconded by Cllr Mike Kermode. **Resolved.**

Cllr Andrew Smith as Chair of the group proceeded to inform Members that the group had been working on an event for children on Admiral's Field. He had found trying to encourage a local person or community group to organise it was proving difficult. As time progresses the group will endeavour to take this forward if possible and report back to Full Council when appropriate.

10. Community Centre

The Deputy Mayor voiced concerns that the centre needed new windows but had very little financial resources. These windows could cost in the region of several thousands of pounds and asked if Council could support.

During the ensuing debate Members reported being aware of the centre's financial situation and that several grant schemes had been highlighted to them by Councillors, for an application from them.

Cllr Mike Kermode proposed that the Community Centre be encouraged to make a formal application to the Council's own grant scheme, seconded by Cllr Gareth Rowlands. **Resolved.**

11. Ukraine Crisis

The Deputy Mayor wanted to open a discussion on how Rhuddlan Town Council might help. He highlighted a potential donation scheme involving Members individual donations matched by Council, and then matched by the government. The Council's Facebook already has a post of support for Ukraine but is there something financial we might be able to provide?

This sparked a lengthy discussion which considered several ways of trying to financially help without using public money earmarked for Rhuddlan Town Council use.

Members agreed not to use Town Council funds but to make a bucket collection during the forthcoming Farmer's Market and bucket collections encouraged at local businesses. One Member offered buckets for this and Members agreed to purchase more if required. Cllr Arwel Roberts so proposed, seconded by Cllr Gareth Rowlands.

Resolved.

An idea that videos could be made and to aid fund raising was discussed and Cllr's Andy Smith and Arwel Roberts offered to support if Cllr. Bleddyn took this forward. The lighting of the castle and a vigil was also mentioned.

12. Land behind the Knights

The Mayor, Clerk and County Councillor Arwel Roberts attended a site meeting with Tom Rowley Conway from Bodrhyddan Estate to agree a way forward with this tidying up this unsightly area.

The Clerk informed Members that the Mr Rowley Conway had agreed the estate would remove the rubbish dumped on the bank, the church deacons will tidy up some trees that they are responsible for at the top of site, and several other trees are not resolved yet.

Bodrhyddan have offered to lease the land to the Town council at a pepper corn rent and to reinstate the bottom wall.

Members were keen to discuss the lease of land offer further, and asked that the Clerk engage further with Bodrhyddan and seek legal advice. They also wanted to make sure that the land was tidied up before any lease was set up and agreed. It was mentioned that DCC Countryside Services would assist in advising on future planting and maintenance of the land.

Cllr Mike Kermode proposed that the Clerk takes the lease discussion further and seeks legal advice. Seconded by Cllr Arwel Roberts. **Resolved.**

13. Planning Applications

i) 44/2022/0130 – Erection of 4 dwellings together with access road & associated works at The Rise, Rhyl Road, Rhuddlan.

Members heard that the applicant is now applying for bungalows as opposed to 2 storey dwellings. The application had gone to appeal and the Inspector ruled that it was missing an affordable housing provision, and that there was no access issue.

There was a strong debate about access concerns, the height of the bungalow dwellings which appeared to be dormer bungalows, and ground water drainage.

Cllr Gareth Rowlands proposed an objection on the grounds of affordable housing provision and reiterate the access concerns. Seconded by Cllr Andrew Smith. **Resolved.**

14. Budget/Finance Matters

a. The Town Clerk had circulated the list of payments which were proposed for approval by Cllr Mike Kermode, seconded by Cllr Gareth Rowlands. **Resolved**

b. Three grant requests had been received from Llangollen International Music Eisteddfod, St Kentigern, and Wales Air Ambulance. These were generic requests for funding by a blanket letter. The Council's grant application scheme was not used and all lacked financial details.

It was noted that St Kentigern had recently been supported.

Members were reminded that Council's protocol is that the formal grant application form be completed.

Cllr Andrew Smith proposed that any blanket letter asking for financial support sent to the Clerk should in the future be returned with the formal application form and guidance. Seconded by Cllr Mike Kermode. **Resolved.**

15. To approve Privacy Statements, a Privacy Policy, & review Financial Regulations

a. The Clerk is currently undertaking the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CILCA) and this Council should have a Privacy Statement and a Privacy Policy due to data Protection guidance. He has therefore prepared two statements (one for the public and one for Cllrs & Officers) along with a privacy policy which Council does not currently have. Cllr Kermode proposed that they be approved by Members. Seconded by Cllr Gareth Rowlands. **Resolved.**

b. The Council reviewed its Financial Regulations in light of Council's resolution to use internet banking, including the approval methods agreed previously by Members. Cllr Gareth Rowlands proposed that the changes be approved, seconded by Cllr Mike Kermode. **Resolved.**

16. Community Matters

a. Cllr Mike Kermode informed Members that the new sensory area within the nature reserve was now completed, and asked that a letter of thanks goes to DCC Countryside Services for their assistance.

b. Cllr Gareth Rowlands also thought a letter of appreciation should go to the dementia group whose project this was and recognising their contribution to our community. Along with a letter to the reserve Management Advisory Group. Members agreed to all three letters being actioned. **Resolved.**

c. Cllr Arwel Roberts brought to Member's attention that a biodiversity expert Iwan Edwards was visiting Ysgol y Castell. Adding the name of Anita Fagan as a member of the community who adds benefit to this subject.

e. Cllr Jackie Burnham had a discussion with a new resident about their observation of a lack of litter bins and dog waste bins in Rhuddlan. Cllr Burnham highlighted the fact that dog waste can be put in litter bins thus increasing the bins available. There followed a short discussion on the subject mentioning that DCC will not supply additional bins and that DCC was paint spraying to highlight dog waste not picked up, in addition to the Council's considerable efforts at trying to resolve this issue. Members agreed to place the issue on a future Council meeting after the elections. **Resolved.**

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 virtual meeting audio recording was stopped at this point.

17. Approval of Supplementary Minutes

Cllrs Jackie Burnham, Mike Kermode, Arwel Roberts, Gareth Rowlands and Bleddyn Williams all declared an interest and left the meeting.

The remaining Councillors were Charlotte Frobisher, Syd Gaskin, Andrew Smith, and Reg Davies which is not quorate

The Minutes therefore cannot be approved.

The resolution from February 10th meeting was to forward the code of conduct complaint to the Monitoring Officer and Standards Committee.

Council had received a reply that this should be referred to the Ombudsman which was accepted by all those present. **Clerk to action**

A second code of conduct complaint was discussed and those present agreed to forward this to the Ombudsman. **Clerk to action**

A third code of conduct complaint was received from a member of public. Town Council is not permitted to deal with such complaints from members of the public so those present agreed to inform the complainant of this fact and that the complaint should be directed to the Ombudsman directly. **Clerk to action**

18 Date of next meeting – 14 April 2022 Full Council Meeting 7pm

Signed..........Cllr Mike Elgin (Mayor)