

Minera Community Council Meeting held on Wednesday 17th June 2020

Commencing at 7.15 pm and conducted by telephone conference

Present: Cllrs: J Edwards (Chair), H Field (Vice-Chair), W Blaze, J Rosier, D Kelly, J Belton

Clerk: Mr D Hinchliffe

Apologies: Cllrs J Barton, J Marsh

29/20 Declarations of interest

29.1/20 There were no declarations of interest.

30/20 Ratification of the minutes of previous meetings

30.1/20 The minutes of the meeting held on 20 May 2020 were proposed for adoption by Cllr H Field and Seconded by Cllr W Blaze.

31/20 Matters arising

31.1/20 The Clerk referred to the draft grants and donations policy which had been prepared by Cllr J Rosier and circulated to all Councillors for review. Prior to adopting the policy, the Clerk was asked to verify whether donations to individuals were legally allowable, and to amend the wording to emphasise that only in exceptional circumstances would a second approach from the same potential beneficiary be entertained.

31.2/20 The equality and diversity policy, which had not been reviewed at the prior month's AGM, was also briefly reviewed and agreed for adoption without amendment.

31.3/20 The notice of co-option to seek applications for 4 current Councillor vacancies had been advertised following clarification by WCBC.

31.4/20 The Clerk had sent letters of appreciation to both Coedpoeth Community Council and WCBC Environmental Services, as requested, to express the thanks of Minera Community Council for services received during the period of lockdown.

31.5/20 The Clerk had also passed details of the Local Places for Nature grant award to Cllr D Kelly for passing on at a subsequent School Governors' meeting.

31.6/20 Cllr D Kelly had not yet discussed the issue of the costs of litter picking and bin emptying within the playgrounds being added to the SLA, but would continue to seek to discuss this with Darren Williams of WCBC.

31.7/20 Cllr W Blaze had discussed different solar light options with Penycae Community Council, and would go and review a more powerful light than that currently outside the Penynant flats, together with Cllrs J Belton and J Edwards once lockdown movement restrictions were sufficiently relaxed.

31.8/20 The Clerk had not yet followed up on correspondence noted at the previous meeting relating to possible waymarking improvements near the Eisteddfod field. Following a short discussion Cllr D Kelly proposed and Cllr J Belton seconded that the Clerk should formally approach the landowner to discuss the issue. The same meeting could also be used to discuss possible alternative siting of the Local Places for Nature butterfly garden resources.

31.9/20 The Clerk had received some guidance from SLCC members concerning recovery plans for the period following lockdown, and would share anything pertinent from published plans as they became available.

32/20 Coronavirus

32.1/20 The Clerk summarised the current situation across the local area. Information continued to be received from AVOW, WCBC and North Wales Police on a weekly basis, and all bulletins were being shared with Councillors. As the more stringent restrictions imposed by lockdown began to ease, the introduction of a Community Agent would be a useful bridge to carry on the efforts of good neighbourliness which had been witnessed across the two neighbouring wards of Minera and Coedpoeth. The chair added that some evidence of complacency was apparent in the use of park facilities, suggesting that maintenance of social distancing and related disciplines could be under pressure in the coming weeks.

33/20 Police report

33.1/20 The Clerk advised the meeting that the police.co.uk crime recording facility was still suspended as resources were devoted to other duties. Bulletins received would continue to be shared with Councillors on receipt.

34/20 Minera Community Council Chair's report

The Chair had circulated his report, and gave a brief recital of matters to which he wished to draw attention:

34.1/20 A walker on the old railway line had highlighted that some protruding bolts embedded in sleepers presented a trip hazard. The Chair would contact her with a view to her advising WCBC of the issue.

34.2/20 The bus stop library facility continued to do very well, albeit it was necessary to remind users to take steps to practice suitable hygiene protocols when handling materials within it.

34.3/20 Concerns had been expressed at the lack of dog waste bins in Bwlchgwyn around the boundary between the Minera and Brymbo wards. This was an issue for Brymbo CC.

35/20 County Borough Councillor's report

Cllr D Kelly briefly commented:

35.1/20 Guidelines were under constant revision and review, but it was hoped that the Senedd would soon follow England's lead and reopen shops, since the proximity of open shops in Chester was causing significant traffic into England from the borough.

35.2/20 Signage production for shops and public areas was on hold due to uncertainty as to whether a 2 metre distancing requirement would be kept or reduced.

35.3/20 Most public transport routes were currently not viable due to scarcity of passengers. Grants would be needed to sustain them following lockdown.

35.4/20 WCBC now had in excess of 30 officers dedicated to supporting Track and Trace.

36/20 School Governor's report

36.1/20 Cllr D Kelly advised the meeting that the Governors were now meeting on a virtual basis each Thursday. The guidelines for reopening the school left most decisions and risk assessments to the Governors.

36.2/20 Based on what was understood from parents' views, attendance levels of around 50% were expected once the school could reopen. The school would therefore continue to plan and prepare for reopening alongside guidance received.

37/20 Correspondence

37.1/20 The Clerk had circulated summaries of correspondence received throughout the month, and had answered individual Councillors' queries as they had arisen. There were therefore no further items for discussion other than issues to be dealt with later in the agenda.

38/20 Grants and donations

38.1/20 The Clerk advised Councillors that a letter of thanks had been received from Hope House for the donation of £500 made at the previous Council meeting, and that a request for a donation had been received from Nightingale House, accompanied by a detailed summary of the pressures faced as a result of Covid-19, and which had been circulated to Councillors on receipt.

38.2.20 Cllr H Field proposed and Cllr W Blaze seconded that a donation of £1,000 should be made from the exceptional donations reserve in favour of Nightingale House.

38.2/20 The Clerk noted that a cheque for £100 had been raised in favour of British Red Cross, as approved at the previous Council Meeting. This payment had been held over for a month due to a clerical error in the drafting of the cheque.

39/20 Financial matters

39.1/20 The Clerk advised the meeting that the internal audit was not yet complete, but should still be completed in time to approve the Annual Return prior to the deadline of 29 June. The Annual Return would accordingly be shared with all Councillors once signed by the internal auditor, and Cllr W Blaze proposed and Cllr H Field seconded that the Annual Return be signed by the Chair following circulation.

39.2/20 The financial report was proposed for approval by Cllr J Belton and seconded by Cllr W Blaze. The schedule of payments, listed below, was proposed for approval by Cllr W Blaze and seconded by Cllr J Belton.

			£	£
Pre-approved	Chq no			
Clerk expenses, April	101886		218.25	
Clerk overtime, April	101887		438.30	
WCBC, School Crossing patrol Q4	101888		1,141.50	
British Red Cross	101889		100.00	
Total pre-approved items				1,898.05
For approval to pay				
Clerk salary, June	STO		314.98	
Clerk Home Working Allowance/phone	STO		28.50	
SSE May account	DDR		217.77	
AVOW membership	101890		15.00	
Clerk expenses, May			14.39	
Clerk overtime, May			126.62	
Cllr J Rosier - Wix subscription	101891		122.40	
AVOW - DBS check for Community Agent	101892		56.50	
S Allcroft - laptop and phone for Agent	101893		323.98	
Total to approve				1,220.14

39.3/20 The Clerk advised the meeting that, following dialogue with HSBC, a minute was required to record the instructions of Minera Community Council to alter certain standing data relating to the banking relationship with HSBC.

It was accordingly noted that a letter would be written and signed in accordance with the bank mandate to instruct a change to the mailing address salutation from 'Mrs E Topham' to 'The Clerk' and that a revised bank mandate form and new primary user form should be submitted to HSBC, nominating Mr D Hinchliffe as the primary user.

40/20 Planning matters – to consider items received from Chief Planning Officer

40.1/20 No planning-related correspondence had been received since the previous Council meeting. Cllr D Kelly advised the meeting that WCBC's Planning Committee would soon be meeting again on a virtual platform, possibly twice a month.

41/20 Community Agent

The newly-appointed Community Agent for the Minera ward, Mrs Susanne Allcroft, joined the meeting.

41.1/20 The Chair welcomed the Agent on behalf of Minera Community Council and those present introduced themselves. A brief discussion followed concerning the setting up of the service and initial publicity, and it was decided to defer detailed discussion to the scheduled weekly informal Zoom meeting of Minera Community Council on 26 June when the Agent would set out plans and steps taken to date. The Clerk would in the meantime ensure that Councillors had the Agent's contact details and the Agent theirs.

41.2/20 A funding agreement had been received from Wrexham CBC to cover the costs of the Agent, including setting up with necessary equipment, for the period to 31 March 2021. The Clerk had checked the agreement and declared it ready for signature. He would therefore present it to the Chair for signature at a convenient time after the meeting and then return it to Wrexham CBC.

The Agent now left the meeting.

42/20 Co-option of up to 4 new Councillors

42.1/20 The Clerk advised the meeting that Notices of Co-option had been published and would run until 29 June. To date one interested party had come forward, who would be contacted by the Clerk with details of the requirements and expectations of Community Councillors. The Clerk would similarly contact any other interested parties who came forward, and Councillors were requested to advise the Clerk once they became aware of anyone interested in joining Minera Community Council.

43/20 Playground safety inspection report

43.1/20 The annual report detailing the safety status of the two play areas under the aegis of Minera Community Council had been received and circulated to all Councillors by the Clerk. Cllr H Field had suggested that the defects and points for attention listed in the report should be the subject of a separate Projects Meeting. This was agreed and the Clerk undertook to send out invitations accordingly, with a provisional date of Thursday 2 July 2020.

Meeting adjourned 2115 hrs.

