

Minera Community Council Meeting held on Wednesday 13th January 2021

Commencing at 7.15 pm and conducted by Zoom videoconference

Present: Cllrs: H Field (Vice-Chair), W Blaze, D Kelly, J Marsh, W Ollerhead, A Roberts, H Eustace

Clerk: Mr D Hinchliffe

Apologies: Cllrs J Edwards (Chair), I Messiter, J Belton.

In the absence of Cllr J Edwards, Cllr H Field took the chair of the meeting, passing on the best wishes of all present to Cllr J Edwards and all of his family for a speedy recovery from their bout of Covid-19.

125/20 Declarations of interest

125.1/20 There were no declarations of interest.

126/20 Ratification of the minutes of previous meetings

126.1/20 The minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2020 were proposed as a correct record by Cllr W Blaze and seconded by Cllr W Ollerhead.

127/20 Matters arising

127.1/20 The Clerk confirmed that the minor correction to the October minutes requested by Cllr W Ollerhead had been applied.

127.2/20 The Clerk advised the meeting that a response from GoSafe relating to training in the use of the speed gun was still awaited, and that dog fouling posters were still to be finalised.

127.3/20 Cllr W Ollerhead had received guideline prices of £2,500 to £3,000 to renovate the New Brighton phone box. This was not a realistic investment at present given parking issues in the vicinity of the box. Volunteers had come forward who were prepared to do some trial renovation of the metalwork and selected panels, and this approach would be undertaken in the first instance.

127.4/20 The Clerk advised that WCBC had not as yet confirmed a date for the meeting with the landowner adjacent to Minera quarry. Issues raised at the previous meeting relating to the removal of a tree on WCBC land, an overgrown hedgerow and an obstructed streetlight adjacent to a WCBC building had been notified to the appropriate officers, however, and responses were awaited.

127.5/20 The Clerk also advised that removal of the redundant rocking horse from Gwynfryn playground had been agreed with WCBC, and would be done as soon as the relevant team could be scheduled to perform the job.

127.6/20 The Clerk also advised that the insurers had been contacted with respect to the protective curtains installed to keep rain out of the Gwynfryn bus shelter book exchange, and had confirmed that there was no resultant insurance concern which needed to be addressed. The Clerk had also passed on Minera Community Council's observations to One Voice Wales concerning the need for OVW to act as advocate for Town and Community Councils in a forthcoming seminar to discuss Town and Country Development Plan proposals.

128/20 Police report

128.1/20 The Clerk confirmed that no formal report had been received from North Wales Police. A number of communications had been received and circulated to Councillors via the summary of correspondence, however, and where relevant would be discussed later in the agenda of the meeting.

129/20 Minera Community Council Chair's report

129.1/20 The Clerk had received a short summary from the Chair via email immediately prior to the meeting.

129.2/20 The Chair's principal observations related to the incursion into the community of traffic from further afield in pursuit of leisure and exercise, notably walking and sledging. A request had also been received to ascertain whether WCBC could extend gritting services into Maesyffynnon Road where one resident in particular had issue caused by the lack of surface treatment in icy weather.

Cllr D Kelly undertook to establish whether there was a grit bin in place on Maesyffynnon Road, given that it was not on a gritting route. That bins continued to be emptied and gritting operations were being undertaken was down to commendable efforts by the respective departments within WCBC.

130/20 County Borough Councillor's report

130.1/20 Cllr D Kelly briefly commented to advise the meeting that the withdrawal of the majority of local bus provision had been occasioned by a Covid outbreak at Aviva's Broughton depot. Around 30 drivers had tested positive and Public Health Wales had mandated a 14 day closure of the depot. Remaining services were largely either originating in different depots (such as the X51) or subcontracted to other operators.

130.2/20 Issues with traffic around local beauty spots and sledging locations was partly caused by Police action in closing gated parks around the borough, sending individuals elsewhere, including to Minera, where access was not so restricted.

130.3/20 No definitive advice had yet been issued as to when local mass vaccination centres would open. Cllrs H Field and H Eustace commented to advise that 18 January was a date in circulation locally, and was the expected date when Glyndwr's facility would open.

131/20 School Governor's report

131.1/20 Cllr W Ollerhead recited the main points of his report:

131.2/20 The impression formed of the first Governors' meeting attended was very good. The meeting was well informed, well organised and informative. It was pleasing to record a number of positive factors, including rising rolls and good performance on attendance and punctuality.

131.3/20 The upcoming Estyn inspection has been delayed due to Covid-19 issues. This will be rescheduled for whenever circumstances allow. Generally the school feels in good shape for the inspection whenever it comes.

132/20 Correspondence

The Clerk had circulated summaries of correspondence received during the month. He therefore drew attention to a small number of items only:

132.1/20 Utility Aid had provided energy cost proposals which showed an increase over current costs. Only the existing supplier had been prepared to tender. Following a short discussion Cllr W Blaze undertook to contact the consortium to establish whether a single supplier was used across the constituent Community Councils, and if so whether appetite existed for a combined enquiry that might produce a sharper price.

132.2/20 The SLA for the maintenance and inspection of play areas had been received, and was offered on the same basis as previously, with only a minor price increase. Cllr D Kelly pointed out that the contract did not provide for certain aspects of maintenance, such as fences and paths. Signature and return of the document was required by 1 April. The Clerk would contact WCBC to clarify the position without committing to additional costs.

132.3/20 The Clerk had been asked by a resident about the ownership of Minera Hall. Coincidentally a great deal of interest in the building had broken out on social media in recent days concerning initiatives to renovate and restore it to use. No approach had been made to Minera Community Council for support at this stage.

Susanne Allcroft now joined the meeting

133/20 Community Agent's report

Susanne briefly commented:

133.1/20 Meet up Tuesday sessions were currently suspended. Efforts were therefore being made to keep in contact with the regular attendees for whom the sessions had become a weekly focal point. Generally, some of the more vulnerable residents were more concerned

not to go out, and prescription requests and similar tasks were becoming more frequent. The Community Agent service was now authorised to issue foodbank vouchers where needed.

133.2/20 The Digital Communities initiative showed great potential to overcome digital isolation, and would hopefully be able to use school premises in the fulness of time. The three iPads sourced from WCBC had been very well received, and there was undoubtedly scope to distribute further units. Susanne would therefore be applying for funding to support this. Cllr W Ollerhead additionally undertook to research the availability of community funding available through his employer in case this could also provide finance for additional units. Following a short discussion Cllr H Field asked Susanne to work up the necessary details for Minera Community Council to be able to consider an appropriate donation to this initiative.

Susanne was thanked once again for her efforts to support the Minera communities, and then left the meeting.

134/20 Grants and donations

134.1/20 The Clerk advised the meeting that North Wales Police had aired the idea of Community Councils providing dedicated funds to PCSOs with which to organise ‘target hardening’ of local vulnerable properties during a recent Police and Community Council forum meeting. The Clerk would seek further details and assurances, including (following a prompt from Cllr D Kelly) details of who might be subcontracted to install any equipment.

134.2/20 The only request for assistance received in the month had been from Wales Air Ambulance. Following a brief discussion it was proposed by Cllr D Kelly and seconded by Cllr J Marsh that a donation be made in their favour in the sum of £200.

135/20 Financial matters, including agreement of the budget for 2021/22

135.1/20 Following a brief recital by the Clerk of the financial activities since the previous Council meeting in November the financial report was proposed for approval by Cllr W Blaze and seconded by Cllr H Eustace. The schedule of payments, listed below, was also proposed for approval by Cllr W Blaze and seconded by Cllr J Marsh.

			£	£
Pre-approved		Chq no		
Clerk salary, November		STO	393.89	
Clerk Home Working Allowance/phone		STO	28.50	
SSE October account		STO	224.77	
Clerk expenses, October/November		Transfer	76.60	
Community Agent, October salary		101927	817.82	
D Fidler, bench repairs		101928	334.00	
Parkinson's Disease Society, Wrexham Branch		Transfer	100.00	
Pancreatic Cancer UK		Transfer	100.00	
Royal British Legion		101929	300.00	
Total pre-approved items				2,375.58
For approval to pay				
Agent expenses, November		Transfer	99.12	
Agent salary, November		Transfer	669.24	
Cllr J Edwards, Civic Budget, tranche 2 2020/21		Transfer	321.60	
Netwise, domain names for website protection		Transfer	60.00	
Clerk salary, December		STO	393.89	
Clerk Home Working Allowance/phone		STO	28.50	
Agent expenses, November/December		Transfer	103.95	
Clerk expenses, November/December		Transfer	42.09	
SSE November account		STO	203.98	
Agent salary, December		Transfer	679.38	
WCBC, crossing patrol, Q2 2020/21		Transfer	1,192.75	
Clerk Expenses, January			14.39	
Audit Wales, audit fee for 2020 external audit			496.35	
Clerk salary, January		STO	393.89	
Clerk Home Working Allowance/phone		STO	28.50	
SSE December account		STO	238.57	
WCBC, half yearly playground inspections per SLA			661.20	
Total to approve				5,627.40

135.2/20 The Clerk had circulated a revised draft of the budget for 2021/22 prior to the meeting. He provided further detail of certain lines of proposed expenditure, noting in particular that no provision was being sought in the precept for 2021/22 for renovation costs relating to Gwynfryn playground. This would continue to be dealt with through Projects Meetings with a view to finalising plans during 2021/22, hopefully when Covid restrictions were entirely removed, whereupon any impact on precept for future years could be assessed.

Following a short review of certain lines of expenditure Cllr W Ollerhead proposed and Cllr H Eustace seconded that the Clerk be authorised to write to WCBC and request a precept of £34,360 for the coming year, a reduction of 3.5% compared to the precept requested and granted for 2020/21.

136/20 Co-option

136.1/20 The Clerk advised the meeting that a notice had been posted inviting any interested residents to request an election to fill the two vacancies currently open on Minera Community Council. This option would expire on 22 January, whereafter if no election was requested, co-option could proceed. The Clerk would therefore advise all Councillors of developments in due course.

137/20 Councillor training/mentoring scheme

137.1/20 The Clerk advised the meeting that, following agreement with One Voice Wales, plans for a bespoke training session had been deferred to a date when current restrictions were less likely to curtail interest from the wider constituency of local Community Councils. In the meantime, OVW's current training offerings would continue to be advised to all Councillors for interest, and following a request from Cllr W Ollerhead, the syllabus of certain courses would be requested in order to help clarify the applicability and relevance of some of the options offered.

138/20 Planning matters – to consider items received from Chief Planning Officer

138.1/20 Correspondence relating to 1 planning application had been received since the previous Council meeting, namely:

P/2020/0824, first floor side extension to Bryn Cottage, Old Road, Minera.

Following a brief discussion of the proposal, no observations or objections were noted for notification to WCBC.

Meeting adjourned 2105 hrs.