

Minera Community Council Meeting held on Wednesday 13th March 2024

Commencing at 7.15 pm at the Tyn y Capel, Minera

Present: Cllrs, T Grundy, A Roberts, G Dillon, K Coventry, W Ollerhead, J Wellens, J Belton

Clerk: Mr D Hinchliffe

Apologies: Cllrs D Kelly, D Gidlow

146/23 Declarations of interest

146.1/23 There were no declarations of interest.

147/23 Selection of a Councillor to chair the meeting

147.1/23 In the unavoidable absence of the Chair, Cllr D Kelly, Cllr J Wellens advised the meeting that he would be content to chair this meeting. All present were in agreement with this proposal.

148/23 Ratification of the minutes of the previous meeting

148.1/23 The minutes of the meeting held on 21 February 2024 were proposed as a correct record by Cllr A Roberts and seconded by Cllr K Coventry.

149/23 Matters arising from the minutes not otherwise dealt with in the agenda

149.1/23 Cllr J Belton had now returned the speed gun to the Clerk.

149.2/23 The Clerk advised the meeting that he had now had a catch up meeting with North Wales Police. The open question relating to a Community Safety Order had been discussed and would be covered later in the meeting.

149.3/23 The Clerk advised the meeting that an estimate had been received to repair the broken bench in Ffordd Bryn Madoc and that he proposed to proceed to commission the repair as the sum was within the £500 limit granted to the Clerk for urgent repairs, for which retrospective approval could be sought.

149.4/23 Cllr W Ollerhead advised the meeting that he would seek the permission for the Youth Service to use school premises in the winter and early spring when he had a meeting with the Head Teacher at the end of the week. The Clerk noted that the need for the warmer environment was now largely redundant for this year, but would be welcome in the autumn when colder and darker conditions returned.

149.5/23 The Clerk advised the meeting that the missing sign at the Lead Mines indicating the direction to the quarry had been notified to WCBC, but as yet no response had been received.

149.6/23 The Clerk had notified to Openreach the emergent hazard of tree branches threatening the broadband cables at the junction of Church Road and Maesyffynnon Road. The response from Openreach had been poor, bordering on indifferent, and it remained to be seen whether the problem escalated from a failure on the part of the service provider to take ownership of it.

149.7/23 The Clerk advised the meeting that the new paper mandate had been submitted to HSBC and two weeks later no notification of any issues had been received. The mandate was therefore considered operative.

149.8/23 The Clerk advised the meeting that plans had been put in place to put white lines on the Gwynfryn football field with the combined assistance of WCBC and Coedpoeth United. The Clerk now awaited advice of when the planned grass cutting would be done, following which he would co-ordinate the work. The young resident who asked for the white lining had been kept up to date with the plan.

149.9/23 The Clerk's enquiries into whether any living or deceased D-Day veteran was either resident in the community or commemorated on the war memorial had led to a conclusion that there were no such veterans' details to pass on to the local organisers of the D-Day 80 commemoration.

149.10/23 The Clerk had enquired whether Groundwork could PAT test the heaters for use by Coffee Companions, but unfortunately no PAT tests were scheduled in the building for 12 months. The Clerk would therefore organise the work via a local electrician.

Susanne Allcroft now joined the meeting.

150/23 Community Agent's report – summary of activities

150.1/23 A request had been received to attend a meeting with parents at the school to explore and identify inter-generational activity opportunities. This would help address aspects of the Estyn report's findings and build on the success of activities undertaken around the coronation in 2023.

150.2/23 A face to face meeting with all Agents and WCBC had been arranged to finalise and unambiguously clarify the breadth and frequency of monitoring paperwork needed for future years. It was hoped that attendance would be much improved from recent such meetings in order that this objective might be achieved.

150.3/23 A 'See and Be Seen' event had been organised by WCBC for 20 March. This was similar to the Ageing Well initiative, and a stand had been requested for the Community Agent service.

150.4/23 A bingo and quiz night at the Tyn y Capel on 25 March had been arranged on behalf of a local child with cerebral palsy, through a family connection with the Coffee Companions group.

150.5/23 An Operation Cinnamon event in Bwlchgwyn in May was being put together by North Wales Police. A stand had been requested to showcase the Community Agent service as the event was aimed at isolated and vulnerable individuals.

150.6/23 A sugarcraft session at Coffee Companions had gone down very well, and further craft sessions were being planned.

150.7/23 The Chair added that he would review the outcomes of the Scrutiny Committee's recent review of the Community Agent service, and in doing so would seek some assurances concerning the necessity of supporting paperwork.

The Chair thanked Susanne for her continuing good work, and she then left the meeting.

151/23 Co-option – update on the process to fill 3 vacancies for Community Councillors

151.1/23 The Clerk advised the meeting that the notice of vacancy had not resulted in a request for an election for the two vacancies to which it related. Additionally, the further vacancy that was subject to notice of co-option had yielded no response. All three vacancies could therefore now be brought together in a new notice of co-option, if desired.

151.2/23 Following a brief discussion the Chair asked the Clerk to prepare a notice of co-option without delay, and to consider other channels through which the vacancies could be publicised.

152/23 Police report – to receive an update from the local policing team

152.1/23 The Clerk had circulated a summary of incidents which had been provided by North Wales Police relating to January and February. There were no further questions arising from this summary.

152.2/23 The Clerk also advised the meeting that he had met two PCSO's from the local policing team on 8 March and discussed a number of issues, including antisocial use of quad bikes in Minera village, the damage to the zipwire seat from dogs chewing the plastic and support for Operation Cinnamon.

152.3/23 Continuing issues with scrap cars and household rubbish on an unadopted road in New Brighton had also been discussed, and the Clerk had relayed the PCSOs' position to concerned residents. North Wales Police were also looking to contact the owners of Minera Hall in liaison with WCBC to apply for a Community Protection Notice.

152.3/23 The PCSOs also reported that some incidents of antisocial behaviour had been logged in Minera which were being actively monitored. The spate of vehicle-related incidents in Bwlchgwyn had died down, however as the individuals concerned were now suspected of concentrating their activities on other parts of the County Borough.

153/23 Footpath issues – report on activities

153.1/23 Cllr T Grundy advised the meeting that the benefits of active management of trees and hedgerows by North Wales Wildlife Trust during 2023 were now showing through alongside several footpaths. Regeneration had been encouraged which should improve biodiversity.

153.2/23 Cllr Grundy also noted that some large mature trees were now being felled. These appeared dead and diseased and were likely to be Ash trees succumbing to Ash Dieback.

154/23 **Minera Community Council Chair's report – summary of activities**

154.1/23 In the Chair's absence this item was deferred.

155/23 **Borough Councillor's report – summary of activities**

155.1/23 In his capacity as Borough Councillor the Chair advised the meeting that WCBC had set a budget based on a 9.9% increase in Council Tax. This still left a deficit which would need active management over several years, with further efficiencies in service provision needed.

155.2/23 A visit to Eversley Court by the WCBC flood team had been gratefully received and had been prompted by the discovery of a large historic drainage system which apparently related to the quarry. As a result of the discovery and the support of the flood team, changes would be made to the local drain scheme maps and recent water eruptions in Church Road would be looked into to ascertain what pressure the newly discovered drain was adding in this area.

155.3/23 The Chair was concerned to ensure his time was efficiently directed to issues of mutual concern to both Community councils in his ward, and he would shortly be contacting both to explore ways of addressing such issues (such as public transport) more effectively.

155.4/23 Cllr J Belton asked what level of reserves were held by WCBC and whether the financial position of WCBC should give rise to concern about potential insolvency. The Chair advised the meeting that reserve policy had been not to over-accrue contingency monies for several years. Reserve accounts were therefore not excessive but were included in the overall outline plan to manage the current deficit and pressure on resources and costs over the coming years without the risk of insolvency.

155.5/23 The Chair concluded by advising the meeting that he was organising a joint local surgery in late April at the Tyn y Capel with the local policing team. Details would be circulated once a date had been finalised.

156/23 **School Governor's report – summary of activities**

156.1/23 Cllr W Ollerhead advised the meeting that, while no full Governors' meeting had been held since the last Council meeting, regular finance, training and other post-Estyn improvement meetings had been held.

156.2/23 WCBC had imposed the same budget on the school as for the prior year, which had presented significant budgetary challenges. These were being addressed urgently with as much flexibility as could be managed. Due to cost pressures on all aspects of school activities this would be a difficult exercise, but all concerned were working hard to achieve a solution.

156.3/23 Follow up of the Estyn findings was being managed through three work streams. The latest post-inspection report showed progress in all three, although some areas were progressing more swiftly than others. The Governors were all continuing to give full commitment to the process nevertheless.

157/23 Correspondence – summary of items received; the Clerk will highlight any issues requiring attention and provide any clarifications

157.1/23 The Clerk had circulated details of correspondence received in the month. He had only one item to amplify from this list, namely the availability of a Shared Prosperity Fund grant which he was in the process of applying for, and which if successfully awarded would enable works to be commissioned finally on the war memorial shelter.

158/23 Grants and donations – to consider requests for financial support received.

158.1/23 Donation requests had been received from St Mary's Church (with respect to grounds maintenance), North Wales Police (in support of the Operation Cinnamon event) and Calon FM.

158.2/23 Following a detailed discussion Cllr G Dillon proposed and Cllr J Belton seconded that a donation of £100 be made to Calon FM and Cllr J Belton proposed, and Cllr K Coventry seconded that a donation of £500 be made to St Mary's Church.

158.3/23 With respect to the award to Calon FM, the Chair asked the Clerk to seek support in return from Calon FM to publicise the Operation Cinnamon event, possibly by giving interview time to the Community Agent, to address Councillors' concerns that the event should be properly publicised to attract the largest possible attendance. The Chair also asked the Clerk to contact PCSO Lydia Edwards to explain this approach to supporting the Operation Cinnamon event and to establish what publicity channels North Wales Police was adopting in their own right.

159/23 Financial matters – to approve the month's financial statement and schedule of proposed payments

159.1/23 The Clerk briefly explained the financial activities for the period, and the details of payments proposed to be made, following which the financial statement for the period was proposed for acceptance by Cllr J Belton and seconded by Cllr K Coventry and the schedule of payments, shown below, was proposed for approval by Cllr J Belton and seconded by Cllr G Dillon.

Mega, installation of defibrillator cabinet at Tyn y Capel	420.00
WCBC, Youth services, half yearly payment	3,174.15
WCBC, crossing patrol, Q3	1,499.75
Audit Wales, audit fee for 2021/22	723.00
Royal Mail, PO Box renewal	396.00
Groundwork, Coffee Companions' room hire (February)	120.00
S Allcroft, Community Agent salary for February	876.24
D Hinchliffe, Clerk salary for March	544.59
D Hinchliffe, Clerk HWA for March	20.00
EE, mobile phone bill for February	13.00
SSE, electricity bills for January and February	850.00
WCBC, repairs to zipwire seat	160.10
HSBC, bank charges for February	5.00
Groundwork, Coffee Companions' room hire (January - late billing)	100.00
S Allcroft, Expenses for March	77.04
Alison Bushell - Coffee Companions sugarcraft demonstrator	75.00
Total to approve	9,053.87

159.2/23 The Clerk presented a brief recital of the anticipated performance against budgeted expenditure for the full year, noting that a small surplus of around £2,500 was expected. This was to be viewed alongside decisions made when setting the 2023/24 budget that certain expenditures in support of the Youth Service, the defibrillator rollout programme and the completion of the New Brighton landscaping project totalling £7,980 should be taken against reserves.

160/23 Planning matters – to consider items received from Chief Planning Officer

160.1/23 Papers had been received relating to planning application P/2024/0123, change of use from agricultural to class B2 (general industrial), Pen y Palmant Farm, Old Road Minera. Following a discussion of the case, the Chair asked the Clerk to advise the case officer of the Council's concerns for development close to existing housing, pressures on road safety, designation of suitable access and the existence nearby vacant light industrial premises.

160.2/23 Cllr J Belton asked the Clerk to contact WCBC to enquire as to the status of planning permission being sought for the installation of an access gate on the approach to the football field as this had been expected to be completed and circulated for consideration no later than the end of February.

Meeting adjourned 2050 hrs.

