

## **Minera Community Council Meeting held on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2024**

### **Commencing at 7.15 pm at the Tyn y Capel, Minera**

**Present:** Cllrs, D Kelly (Chair), K Coventry (Vice-chair), T Grundy, G Dillon, L Brook, B Heard, J Wellens, D Gidlow, J Belton

Clerk: Mr D Hinchliffe

**Apologies:** Cllrs A Roberts, W Ollerhead

#### **42/24            Declarations of interest**

**42.1/24**            There were no declarations of interest.

#### **43/24            Ratification of the minutes of the previous meeting**

**43.1/24**            The minutes of the meeting held on 28 August 2024 were proposed as a correct record by Cllr K Coventry and seconded by Cllr G Dillon.

#### **44/24            Matters arising from the minutes not otherwise dealt with in the agenda**

**44.1/24**            The Clerk advised the meeting that white lining of the Gwynfryn football field never took place, and that the contractor had proven uncontactable since late August. Sadly, an opportunity to upgrade the field for the summer holidays had been missed, and the contractor would not now be approached again for future business.

**44.2/24**            The Clerk advised the meeting that an action to move forward with land registration of 'The Nurse' and the Gors quarry had not yet begun due to the hiatus of a holiday. Efforts would therefore begin imminently.

**44.3/24**            As the overhanging branches which were blocking the bridleway by Minera Hall had still not been dealt with, the Clerk would visit the site with a pole saw in the near future and ascertain whether the situation could be easily resolved.

**44.4/24**            The Chair advised the meeting that he had not yet met with the proprietor of Jordan's Commercials to ascertain whether the Five Crosses noticeboard would need to move.

**44.5/24**            The Clerk confirmed that a donation from the Civic Budget towards the cost of the recent Flower Festival had still not been requested by the Church Wardens. Cllr L Brook had attempted to expedite the request, and the Clerk would now also make contact in an effort to close this open item.

**44.6/24**            The Clerk confirmed that the changeover to gov.wales email addresses had paused during his recent holiday, and would now resume with resolution to begin with of any issues preventing easy access to email accounts via mobile devices.

**44.7/24** The Clerk advised the meeting that repairs to the fence opposite Minera School had been carried out on two separate occasions in the last month, once by WCBC and once by a resident. At the request of North Wales Police the persistent vandalism had been made the subject of a formal crime report so that investigative action and outcomes could be recorded.

**44.8/24** The Clerk confirmed that work to renovate the War Memorial bus shelter had been completed and that the invoice for the works (understood to have been completed within budget) was now awaited.

**44.9/22** The Clerk had passed on to North Wales Police concerns expressed at the previous Council meeting relating to apparent drug dealing at the blocked entrance to the old Tomlinson's site on Gwernygaseg Road. A commitment to increase the frequency of nighttime and twilight patrols had been received.

**44.10/24** The Clerk had sought further advice from WCBC concerning the sourcing and installation of an outdoor table tennis table. This had yielded useful guidance relating to installation and manufacturing specifications and would be used to obtain better quotations than had been initially found online. The Clerk would therefore seek to provide details for a decision to be made at the next Council meeting and Cllr G Dillon would feed this information back to the children who had originated the initial request for a table to be installed.

**45/24 Co-option – to consider the timing of the next search for one additional Community Councillor**

**45.1/24** Following a brief discussion relating to the time available to conclude a co-option exercise before Christmas Cllr G Dillon proposed and Cllr K Coventry seconded that the Clerk be instructed to create and publicise the necessary notices to seek to fill the remaining vacancy for one Councillor.

**46/24 Police report – to receive an update from the local policing team**

**46.1/24** The Clerk had circulated a summary of incidents which had been provided by North Wales Police relating to September. The report was reviewed, noting that police activity had been low in the month under review.

**46.2/24** The matter of the persistent damage being done to the fence in front of Minera School was discussed, following which the Chair asked the Clerk to enquire whether the WCBC maintenance team might be able to add rungs to the fence to make it less easy for children to swing on it and bring down sections of timber.

**46.3/24** Cllr K Coventry also asked the Clerk to enquire with GoSafe as to how she could obtain training to be able to conduct speed checks, and to advise GoSafe of persistent and worsening instances of driving at excessive speed on the road between Minera and Wern, requesting whether data could be collected using roadside cables.

**47/24 Footpath issues – report on activities**

**47.1/24** Cllr T Grundy reported that there were no emergent issues relating to footpaths at present. All paths were very wet from recent poor weather, but otherwise no problems were apparent.

**48/24 Borough Councillor’s report – summary of activities**

**48.1/24** Cllr J Wellens advised the meeting that the Judicial Review of WCBC’s Local Development Plan was currently the subject of further judicial scrutiny at the High Court in London. Proceedings had concluded with judgement reserved for handing down in due time. Cllr Wellens undertook to advise all Councillors of the outcome.

**48.2/24** The review of roads affected by the 20mph national speed limit for consideration of revision of speed limits currently in place had continued. Three roads in the Minera Ward (Minera Hall Road, Church Road to the Lead Mines and the B5426 at Wern) remained on the cut down list and public consultation continued. This consultation had been devolved from Welsh Government to WCBC.

**48.3/24** A presentation relating to the proposed new national park had been attended, and the current footprint of the park included a small proportion of the Minera Ward. A public consultation was now underway with a report to follow in 2025. The Chair added that he had been given to understand that the proposal to institute the national park was supported by the National Landscape (formerly the AONB) in view of the expected additional funding it was expected to attract to the area.

**48.4/24** Cllr G Dillon asked whether WCBC would be hosting a local consultation meeting into the proposal as had been arranged by other Parent Authorities. Cllr Wellens was unaware of such a meeting at present but would seek to encourage one to be organised if not already planned. He also confirmed that the Clywedog Valley Trail would not be part of any national park structure.

**48.5/24** Cllr Wellens concluded his report by advising the meeting that he would shortly be checking all of the community’s salt bins for condition ahead of winter, and that all but one known blocked drain had been cleared. Work to fix the culvert opposite Minera School was being scoped so as to make best use of grant money which had been secured to finance upgrade works.

**49/24 School Governor’s report – summary of activities**

**49.1/24** In Cllr W Ollerhead’s absence this item was deferred, noting that no meetings had yet taken place since the school summer holiday.

Susanne Allcroft now joined the meeting.

**50/24 Community Agent’s report – summary of activities**

**50.1/24** Referrals were arriving at a steady pace, with some individual cases being quite complicated. Requests for assistance beyond the Minera Ward boundary had been referred to WCBC.

**50.2/24** The Three Counties Connected-sponsored reminiscence project had now begun to gain momentum with enthusiastic support from Coffee Companions, with the ultimate intention of producing a book about local mineral and passenger railways. The project would run to the end of March 2025 and would include finance for the continuing rental of meeting space.

**50.3/24** Following a discussion of the project several Councillors offered items which would be useful to the project and details of organisations who could be approached for materials.

**50.4/24** Susanne had recently completed refresher training for Dementia Friends, and a trip to Llandudno in late August and jointly organised with the Rhos Community Agent had been very well supported and enjoyed.

**50.5/24** Examples of digital disconnectedness had been encountered in relation to difficulties experienced checking planning documents for the development of the Pen y Palmant farm site and in relation to Community Agents being dissuaded by WCBC from making Blue Badge applications. Feedback had been given to WCBC concerning the need for access to planning details to be made easier for individuals unaccustomed to working online, and Blue Badge support would now be provided in a supervisory rather than hands on manner.

The Chair thanked Susanne for her continued valuable work, and she now left the meeting.

## **51/24 Remembrance event arrangements**

**51.1/24** The Clerk advised the meeting that Rev Emma Dale would conduct the ceremony on Saturday 9 November and that Minera School would be participating, including the reading of a passage of scripture by the Head Teacher. The names of the fallen would be read by a resident once again, and wreaths (including one for the Coedpoeth event on Sunday 10 November), banner bearers and buglers had all been organised. Publicity had been circulated, which would be repeated before the event, and the Tyn y Capel would be asked to provide refreshments. Arriva had been asked to hold the bus away from the bus stop, and their confirmation was awaited.

**51.2/24** The Chair advised the meeting that he would sadly not be present due to other commitments and asked that his role be fulfilled by another Councillor.

**51.3/24** Cllr T Grundy proposed, and Cllr J Belton seconded that donations from the Civic Budget of £200 to Royal British Legion and £100 to the Salvation Army be made as part of the Remembrance event. All present were in agreement.

## **52/24 Review of Training Plan (legally required to be re-issued by 5 November)**

**52.1/24** The Clerk had circulated the existing document and advised the meeting that 5 November was the annual date by which the Training Plan had to be reissued following its coming into law in Wales in 2023. He proposed one minor amendment which would facilitate compliance with training in the Code of Conduct, by requiring the Clerk to provide an up-to-date code to each Councillor following each election, and whenever revised by WCBC.

**52.2/24** Cllr J Wellens proposed and Cllr D Gidlow seconded that the Clerk's proposal be adopted and the Training Plan reissued within the prescribed deadline, duly amended. All present were in agreement.

**52.3/24** Following a further brief discussion the Chair asked the Clerk to make enquiries into the cost and availability of bespoke training sessions for a number of Councillors, and into joint sessions to be held in conjunction with other Community Councils.

**53/24 Correspondence – summary of items received; the Clerk will highlight any issues requiring attention and provide any clarifications**

**53.1/24** The Clerk had circulated details of correspondence received in the month and drew attention to four items.

**53.2/24** The external audit had not yet begun, having been due for completion by 30 September. A notice excusing Audit Wales's delay together with draft accounts had been published in line with legal requirements and no further action was proposed unless or until Audit Wales finally advised commencement of their work.

**53.3/24** The loss and non-replacement of one member of WCBC staff who covered some of the Community Agent administration had resulted in certain tasks being pushed down to the Clerk. This included certifying monitoring returns, which could not be effectively done within confidentiality requirements and was therefore subject to continuing dialogue to resolve.

**53.4.24** A Welsh Government review into the governance and fitness for purpose of the Town and Community Council sector was scheduled to take evidence in a public hearing on 23 October. The Clerk had therefore participated in a preparatory session organised by One Voice Wales and would also attend the hearing as an observer. One Voice Wales' submission to the hearing would be shared with Councillors on receipt.

**53.5/24** The Clerk had drafted a revised letter of consent for Utility Aid to be able to research possible better energy prices on behalf of the streetlighting consortium. The letter would be submitted within the following week via the co-ordinator, the Clerk to Penrycae CC.

**54/24 Grants and donations – to consider requests for financial support received.**

**54.1/24** Donation requests had been received in favour of Coedpoeth Befrienders, Eisteddfod yr Urdd and Wrexham Sounds. Following a brief discussion a proposal by Cllr J Belton and seconded by Cllr T Grundy to award £200 to Coedpoeth Befrienders did not receive the support of the meeting as Cllr G Dillon had raised a question as to whether Minera benefitted from the services of this charity (given its name) and whether if so Coedpoeth Community Council had itself supported the charity. The Clerk confirmed that the charity did work in Minera and would forward to all Councillors a letter received which detailed this. He also undertook to establish any level of support provided by the neighbouring Community Council.

**54.2/24** Subsequent to this discussion the following donations were agreed by all present:

£100 to Coedpoeth Befrienders, proposed by Cllr G Dillon and seconded by Cllr K Coventry.

£100 to Eisteddfod yr Urdd, proposed by Cllr J Wellens and seconded by Cllr J Belton.

£100 to Wrexham Sounds, proposed by Cllr G Dillon and seconded by Cllr K Coventry.

**55.24 Financial matters – to approve the month’s financial statement and schedule of proposed payments**

**55.1/24** 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 D Gidlow and seconded by Cllr G Dillon and the schedule of payments, shown below, was proposed for approval by Cllr J Belton and seconded by Cllr J Wellens.

One Voice Wales - induction training for Cllr L Brook	40.00
WCBC Mayor's Charity Fund - donation from Civic Budget	100.00
Nightingale House - donation	300.00
EE - Clerk's phone bill for August	24.96
D Hinchliffe, Clerk's salary for September	529.59
D Hinchliffe, Clerk's HWA for September	20.00
HSBC, bank charges for August	5.00
SSE, electricity bill for August	398.73
S Allcroft, Agent salary for September	861.22
EE - Clerk's phone bill for September	24.96
S Allcroft, Agent salary for August	1,183.73
SSE, electricity bill for September	400.00
Groundwork, room hire for September	120.00
Mega, quarterly bill for faults and maintenance	293.29
D Hinchliffe, Clerk's salary for October	529.59
D Hinchliffe, Clerk's HWA for October	20.00
HSBC, bank charges for September	5.00
<b>Total to approve</b>	<b>4,856.07</b>

**55.2/24** Noting that the external audit was delayed with no confirmed start date, and that the presentation of the ensuing fee invoice could well be delayed into the subsequent financial year, Cllr G Dillon asked the Clerk to ensure that the precept for 2025/26 would not be overburdened as a result of the failings of Audit Wales by having to fund two audit fees.

**55.3/24** The Clerk responded to confirm that the current year's fee had been precepted and would be held in reserve at the end of the financial year, if necessary, to fund the eventual payment to Audit Wales in a year subsequent to the one to which its invoice related.

**55.4/24** The Chair reminded the meeting that the National Eisteddfod of Wales would be held in Wrexham in 2025. Although a modest donation had been made in favour of the event in the current financial year, it would be prudent to consider a larger donation to be included in the precept for 2025/26 when budgets were set as the event was expensive to host and further support could be thereby considered ahead of receiving a request for a donation.

**55.5/24** The Clerk confirmed that a draft budget for 2025/26 would be available for Councillors to review at the next meeting, and that he would ensure that this suggestion was included in the donations line for specific consideration, with a donation from reserves potentially to be considered as an alternative to an addition to precept. He also confirmed that a larger donation would not breach the limits of the allowance permitted by s137 of the Local Government Act 1972 which currently placed a ceiling of around £8,500 on donations that could be made in any one year.

**56/24 Planning matters – to consider items received from Chief Planning Officer**

**56.1/24** No planning applications having been advised by WCBC since the previous Council meeting, there was nothing to discuss under this item of business.

**56.2/24** Cllr J Belton raised concerns that parking on the private road in front of the Gwynfryn Defibrillator had become a persistent problem and had also prevented the mowers being able to access the play area to cut the grass in the Summer. The Chair asked the Clerk to research the possibility of acquiring suitable 'no parking' signs to be installed in an attempt to forestall the problems being experienced.

Meeting adjourned 2105 hrs.