



HAWARDEN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Hybrid Meeting

held on

14th March 2022

PRESENT: Chair: Councillor Helen Brown

Councillors: Joyce Angell, Janet Axworthy, Gillian Brockley, Cheryl Carver, Clive Carver, George Hardcastle, Dave Mackie, Dan Preece, Emma Preece, Ralph Small, Sam Swash, Darren Sterry, Richard Taylor and Ant Turton

Officers: Mrs Sharron Jones, Clerk & Financial Officer
Fran Griffiths, Admin Assistant

Also present: Three members of the public

169/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Apologies for absence had been received and accepted for Councillors Ve Amos (illness), Bob Connah (family commitments), Sarah Hinks (illness) and Ryan O’Gorman (work).

170/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

Councillor Dave Mackie declared an interest in items 22 and 31(i).
Councillors Helen Brown, Ralph Small, Darren Sterry and Ant Turton declared an interest in item 21.

All member would complete their Declaration of Interest forms as soon as possible.

171/21 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:

Some members expressed their dissatisfaction that the sound had been particularly difficult at the previous meeting and some items could not be heard properly and therefore it had been difficult to approve the minutes.

After a lengthy discussion **IT WAS RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the previous meeting be approved, save and except that the item that had included colleagues from Flintshire County Council be not approved as members who had attended the meeting virtually had been unable to hear the item.

172/21 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES:

The Clerk and Financial Officer advised that the extended warranty for the new van had been for a period of two years and not one year which had been welcomed by members.

173/21 INTERIM INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT:

IT WAS RESOLVED: to receive the 2021-22 interim audit report and approve the actions listed in the action plan.

174/21 RECORDING COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETINGS AND PROVIDING PUBLIC ACCESS TO THESE RECORDINGS:

Councillor Richard Taylor had submitted a report for the Community Council to understand the benefits of formal transparency to the community and for the community council. He said that recording and giving public access to the recordings of meetings would provide a high level of transparency into why and how the community councillors acted in representation of their community. The recordings would provide more context, details and accuracy to the minutes and would go towards providing a level of meaningful accountability to councillors.

He stated that, in his opinion, the need to record meetings had been demonstrated on several occasions through inaccurate minutes and the failure of members to declare an interest in items and protect their identity therefore preventing objective discussions.

A lengthy discussion took place with several members commenting that they disputed the comments of Councillor Taylor and that the public had access to the meetings and that the minutes had been accurate. An alternative proposal had been suggested to proceed with the recording of meetings but that the appropriate policies and agreements would need to be in place before any recordings to protect staff and visitors.

In accordance with Standing Order number 47, Councillor Richard Taylor requested that a recorded vote be taken. The vote was recorded as follows:

COUNCILLOR	DECISION
Joyce Angell	Abstained
Janet Axworthy	Abstained
Gillian Brockley	For
Helen Brown	For
Cheryl Carver	Abstained
Clive Carver	Abstained
George Hardcastle	For
Dave Mackie	Against
Dan Preece	For
Emma Preece	For
Ralph Small	For
Darren Sterry	For
Sam Swash	For
Richard Taylor	For
Ant Turton	For

IT WAS RESOLVED: to proceed with the recording of meetings but that the appropriate policies and agreements would need to be in place before any recordings to protect staff and visitors. That this be implemented in six.

175/21 FCC#BeKindOnline:

The County Council had recently launched a campaign called *#FCCBeKindOnline*. The aim of the campaign had been to raise awareness of responsible use of the internet and social media and end cyber bullying within communities. The Community Council had been encouraged to make the same pledge.

IT WAS RESOLVED: to approve and take part in the campaign.

176/21 CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS:

The Chairman provided the following report:

- She had attended the Flintshire County Council Chairman's Ball at the Beaufort Park on 11th March. It had been a worthwhile event which had supported two charities, Nightingale House and Hope House.
- Together with Councillors Ralph Small, Darren Sterry and Ant Turton they had collected and transported donated items to Wrexham for despatch to the Ukraine appeal.
- She presented Councillor Ralph Small with a gift in recognition of his 30 years' service as a member of Hawarden Community Council. Councillor Small thanked members for the unexpected and thoughtful gift.

Councillor Darren Sterry presented the following items:

177/21 PARKING ISSUES OUTSIDE THE VILLAGE CHURCH SCHOOL, HAWARDEN

A member reported that children in Year 7, as part of a school project, had written letters to the Community Council about their concerns over traffic, parking and their safety in getting to and from school.

Members confirmed that traffic issues had remained a problem outside this and other schools for a long time and that the Community Council had a duty of care to the children. continue dialogue with the county council to resolve the situation. Some local members had previously campaigned for improvements to this area to no avail.

IT WAS RESOLVED: to defer this item to the meeting in June following discussions with County Council officers.

178/21 CONSULTATION ON THE DRAFT ASSESSMENT OF WELL BEING IN FLINTSHIRE:

The Clerk and Financial Officer encouraged all members to complete the survey and said that she would also complete it on behalf of Hawarden Community Council.

IT WAS RESOLVED: that all members complete the survey individually and that the Clerk and Financial Officer submit a response on behalf of the Community Council.

179/21 FLINTSHIRE PLAY SUFFICIENCY ASSESSMENT 2022:

The Community Council had been asked by the County Council to prepare a local response to the Play and Sufficiency Assessment 2022. Councillor Dave Mackie confirmed that he had drafted a response to Janet Roberts, Play Development Officer and the County Council.

IT WAS RESOLVED: that the Clerk and Financial Officer complete the response on behalf of the Community Council with the inclusion of Councillor Mackie's comments.

180/21 STAFF RETIREMENTS:

The Clerk and Financial Officer said that the interview panel had successfully appointed two new members of staff following the recent announcement that two members of staff would retire. She shared the details of the new members of staff with members and confirmed that a one-week period of shadowing would be provided for the Maintenance Assistant and two weeks for the Senior Maintenance Officer with start dates of 1st April and 9th May respectively.

Members were also reminded to deliver their leaving gift contribution to the office.

IT WAS RESOLVED: to note the update.

181/21 CONSIDERATION OF A WELSH GOVERNMENT APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME WITHIN THE OFFICE:

Councillor Helen Brown had proposed that the Community Council consider whether or not to appoint an apprentice within the council office. She said that it would be beneficial for an apprentice to be appointed in the office and that it would be the first such appointment in a North Wales. An employer incentive had been made available if the appointment could be made by the 31st March, 2022.

Members expressed concerns that there might not be enough work to sustain an appointment, the salary provided did not appear to be a reasonable living wage and the issue should be deferred until further information and costings were made available.

IT WAS RESOLVED: to approve the appointment of an apprentice in the office.

182/21 POLICE MATTERS:

A member reported an incident of assault near the Glynne Arms on Saturday 12th March 2022 and two people had been arrested.

IT WAS RESOLVED: to receive and note the update.

183/21 HIGHWAYS MATTERS:

John Griffiths had been welcomed to the meeting. Members raised the following matters:

- Footpath on Hawarden Way towards Sandycroft school in poor condition. Previous complaints to the County Council had not been acknowledged.
- Excessive foliage on The Highway, near Hawarden High School reported to Barry Wilkinson.
- Roof on bus stop at Gladstone Way required repair.
- Puddle does not appear to recede near the bus stop outside Wellfield Residential Home, Wood Lane.
- Obscene graffiti at the bus stop on Courtland Drive.

Members also expressed their thanks to the County Council for clearing the drains after the recent heavy rain and for supplying sand bags during that time.

IT WAS RESOLVED: to note the updates.

184/21 MEMBERS' INFORMATION ITEMS:

Councillor Darren Sterry confirmed that Years 8 and 9 from Hawarden High School had recently won their quarter finals in the Welsh Football Academy and if they were to win the semi-finals they would play the New Saints Football Club in the finals.

Councillor Clive Carver, Chair of Lighting, presented the following item:

185/21 LIGHTING FAULTS:

There were none.

Councillor Joyce Angell, Chair of Planning, presented the following items:

186/21 PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND DECISIONS:

IT WAS RESOLVED:

- (a) County Council Members:
It was noted that the participation of those Councillors who were also Members of the County Council, in both the debate and subsequent vote, was on the basis that the views expressed had been preliminary views taking account of the information made available to the Community Council.
The County Councillors reserved their final views on the applications until they were in full possession of all relevant arguments for and against.
- (b) That the County Planning Authority be advised of this Council's observations on the applications submitted to it for consideration, as per the attached schedule.
- (c) That the planning decisions be noted.

Councillor Ant Turton, Chair of Community and Environment, presented the following items:

187/21 APPOINTMENT OF COMMUNITY GOVERNOR AT EWLOE GREEN C.P. SCHOOL:

The appointment of the minor authority Governor had expired and a further appointment had been required.

IT WAS RESOLVED: to appoint Councillor Darren Sterry for a further term to serve as a Governor.

188/21 NEW COMMUNITY CENTRE AT EWLOE:

The Clerk and Financial Officer reported that on Friday 25th February 2022 the land off Level Lane had formally transferred into the Community Council's ownership. The developer had also donated the heras fencing surrounding the land which had been welcomed and the land had been added to the council's maintenance programme.

It had been suggested that a small working group of Ewloe members meet with the Independent Property Consultant to review the next steps in the development of a new Community Centre. Councillors Dan Preece and Darren Sterry had offered to be involved. Some members felt that the working group should be considered by the new council with the local government elections pending.

IT WAS RESOLVED: that, in principle, a small working group be established to review the next steps.

189/21 PERMISSION TO USE GLADSTONE PLAYING FIELDS:

The Hawarden Events Team had requested approval to use the Gladstone Playing Fields for its annual festival.

IT WAS RESOLVED: to approve the use of Gladstone Playing Fields on Saturday 8th July, 2022 for the annual festival.

190/21 REQUEST FROM ST. DEINIOL'S CHURCH TO CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS FLOWERS:

St. Deiniol's Church had circulated information about a community event entitled "*Scent from Heaven*". It would be a flower festival within the community to mark the Queen's Platinum Anniversary and a donation had been sought from the council.

IT WAS RESOLVED: to approve a donation of £50 towards the festival.

In accordance with standing order 41, an extension of 15 minutes had been requested and approved by members.

191/21 REQUEST FROM RESIDENTS TO INSTALL A GATE ACCESS ONTO THE GLADSTONE PLAYING FIELDS:

This item had been withdrawn from the agenda due to the wall in question not being in the ownership of the Community Council.

192/21 COMMUNITY ORCHARD AT ALLOTMENT SITE:

IT WAS RESOLVED: that a group of community volunteers along with allotmenters and the Council's maintenance staff clear the orchard to its original position and maintain the area.

193/21 H.M. THE QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS:

The Clerk and Financial Officer had received the quote for the specialist design commemorative coins to be donated to all pupils at the four primary schools and the High School to commemorate this prestigious event.

Some members queried the cost of the coins when families had been subject to many increases in inflation, energy and fuel prices and that this money could be better spent. Other members referred to pupils who resided within the community but attended schools outside the area.

Following a lengthy discussion, **IT WAS RESOLVED TO:** to approve quotation Init0297a to purchase the coins supplied in individual poly bags at a cost of £2,172.24 to be donated to pupils in the four primary schools and the High School.

Councillor Sam Swash wished to have his name recorded as having voted against the proposal.

Councillor Dave Mackie, Chair of Finance, presented the following items:

194/21 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT:

IT WAS RESOLVED: that the list of payments in the sum of £37,680.76 for March be approved.

195/21 CLERK AND FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT:

The Clerk and Financial Officer reported on the following issues:

- The cost to the Council for the Joint Maintenance agreement for March had been 16,979.59.
- The old Ford Transit van had been sold for £2,119.50.
- Due to the forthcoming elections, the Community Council meeting on 11th April would be a transactional business meeting of planning, finance and information items.
- The national pay award for 2021 had finally been agreed at the beginning of March at 1.75% backdated to April 2021.
- Due to the current uncertainty in the energy market, she had been unable to obtain three quotes for unmetered supplies. Utility Aid had sought quotes for the council and had provided a quote from Scottish and Southern Electricity which provided a £12,000 saving on that provided by Scottish Power, with an option to sign up to a two, three or four-year contract. She had discussed the quotes with the Chairman of Finance and a three-year contract had been awarded. The cost of this astronomical increase would need to be taken from the Council's reserves. The need to find efficiencies and an increase in the precept would be required the following year.

IT WAS RESOLVED: to note the updates.

In accordance with standing order 41, an extension of 15 minutes was requested and approved by the members.

196/21 BANK RECONCILIATION:

IT WAS RESOLVED: that the bank reconciliation for the period ending 28th February be received and noted.

197/21 ROTARY YOUTH LEADERSHIP AWARD (RYLA):

The council had been asked to consider sponsoring this annual event at a cost of £350 that had been budgeted for.

IT WAS RESOLVED: to approve RYLA sponsorship scheme in the sum of £350.

198/21 DONATION TO THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL:

The Council had been reminded that in June 2021, *minute number 22/21 refers*, a donation of £1,014.74 had been given to the council from the Ewloe Senior Citizens' Bingo Club. They had asked the council to receive this money and "put it to good use". Members put forward a number of suggestions.

IT WAS RESOLVED: to use this money to top up the Council's Bursary Scheme for pupils at the Hawarden High School.

199/21 SMALL GRANTS:

IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:

- i) Ewloe Social Club be awarded a grant of £100.
- ii) Hawarden Air Cadets be awarded a grant of £250 and
- iii) Hawarden Brownies and Guides be awarded a grant of £250.