



CHIRK TOWN COUNCIL CYNGOR TREF Y WAUN

MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING HELD 25th OCTOBER 2017

Present

Cllrs Mr Frank Hemmings (FH), Mrs Jackie Allen (JA), Mrs Barbara Humphreys (BH), ,
Mr Michael Maxfield (MM), Mr Newman James (NJ), Miss Lynne Painter (LP), Mrs Dot Griffiths (DG),
Mrs Sarah Williams (SW), Mr Brian Colley (BC), Mr Mark Holmes (MH), Mr Terry Evans (TE) &
Mr Mark Roberts (MR).
Mr Shaun Jones (SJ), Clerk to the Council.

Apologies

Apologies for absence: Cllrs. Mr Gareth Baines , Ms Kirsty Cottam & Ms Eleanor Burnham,

Declarations of Interest

Declarations of Interest: No declarations of interest made at this point

Cheque presentation ceremony to Ifton Colliery Commemorative Project team. The £500 donation approved at the last Council meeting was personally presented by FH and photographs taken. All Councillors signed a letter of support too.

84. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES AS A TRUE RECORD OF THE MEETING HELD ON 27TH SEPTEMBER 2017.

The draft minutes for the Council Meeting held 27th September 2017 are now put to the Council as an accurate record of proceedings. **The motion proposed NJ and seconded LP was passed unanimously.**

85. TO CONSIDER ANY MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES RECEIVED ABOVE NOT REPORTED ELSEWHERE.

Minute 72 – 27.9.2017 – JA requests clarification and suggests re-wording – The Clerk is the key holder for the new Lodgevale noticeboard. The Clerk is happy to receive community notices to be displayed on Town Council noticeboards – 5 in total (includes Lodgevale).

86. TO CONSIDER NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING MATTERS

No Crime and ASB report received from our local PCSO team.
SJ formally requested to invite Insp. Steve Owens to attend the November Ordinary Council meeting.

87. TO HEAR PRESENTATION FROM EILWEN JONES, REGIONAL EMERGENCY PLANNING OFFICER – COMMUNITY EMERGENCY PLAN – CHIRK IN PILOT SCHEME.

FH welcomed Eilwen Jones and Jon Holland and invited them to make their presentation. Both Eilwen and Jon are representing the North Wales Councils – Regional Emergency Planning Service. Their wish is to raise awareness of Community Resilience and engage with community members. The development of a Community Emergency Plan will facilitate a robust co-ordinated approach to an incident that complements the plans of responding agencies. A model template has been published and initial pilot communities are being chosen ahead of a comprehensive roll out across North Wales. Chirk community is being offered the chance to one of the pilot communities. Councillors raised a number of questions which Eilwen and Jon answered. The next step is to form a “task & finish” group with community representation across the piece, including local businesses and schools. It was proposed by LP and seconded by BC to adopt in principle the offer for Chirk community to be a pilot for this scheme – carried. An initial meeting where invitations are sent to a wide range of community participants is the first action. It was mentioned that the Royal Voluntary Service (formally WRVS) may have undertaken a similar planning exercise.

88. TO RECEIVE REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 2nd OCTOBER 2017.

The draft report and recommendations of the General Purposes Committee meeting held 2nd October 2017 are now put to the Council as an accurate record of proceedings. **The motion proposed BH and seconded MM was passed unanimously.**

89. TO RECEIVE REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM STAFF SUB-COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD 13TH SEPTEMBER 2017.

The draft report of the Staff Sub-Committee meeting held 13th September 2017 is now put to the Council as an accurate record of proceedings. **The motion proposed SW and seconded MH - motion carried.**

TE speaking as a resident expressed concern that staff costs appear to be rising and wonders how this might affect the amount requested of residents through the Community Council precept. SJ clarified that the new hire on the Caretaker team was a replacement and the staff costs for the Assistant Clerk are partly offset in the proposed reduction of contracted hours by the Clerk/RFO. Both decisions will still see total staffing costs fall within budget.

JA does note meeting minutes are being published with less than a week to review. SJ apologises that this particular report was not available for the September meeting. LP has spent a good amount of time in the Clerk's Office over recent days and sees extra help needed – having an assistant will remove some routine tasks e.g. taking phone calls while personal callers are present.

Recommendations made are now put to Council, **motion carried.**

90. TO RECEIVE ORAL REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES.

JA & SJ attended the One Voice Wales AGM conference held at the Royal Welsh Showground in Builth Wells on Saturday 30th September. Mark Drakeford AM was the keynote speaker and the subject of his presentation was the future of town and community councils. A year long review and resultant report and recommendations is now underway. In the second session which saw the business of the AGM undertaken there were a number of motions put forward by member councils as well as the final motion which concerns a proposal over the membership fee for the next financial period. At our last meeting it was hoped for a view to be given by Chirk councillors on the tabled motions, unfortunately our meeting overran and so JA had no agreed stance and therefore did not exercise our vote. As it happens all motions were passed by a comfortable majority. The final motion concerning raising the membership fee was subjected to an amendment that was passed and saw approval for a 5% rise. This in part related back to discussions on the One Voice Wales legal constitution and it's finances, where approving an above inflation increase was felt to be prudent for the organisation overall.

BH advised Councillors of the recent appointment of a new Headteacher at Pentre Primary School. Mrs Helen Pugh takes up the position after half term.

91. TO RECEIVE ORAL REPORTS FROM LOCAL MEMBERS – WREXHAM CBC.

TE outlined a consultation exercise "Difficult Decisions 2018-20" is underway. Budgets at Wrexham CBC have been cut year on year. Since 2008 over £52 million reduction seen. In the next two financial periods a further £13 million in savings has to be found. We were down to the bone, now to the marrow. Some areas being considered, whether the £140,000 used for additional PCSO posts in WCBC is to continue. Under waste collection a proposal to empty the black general waste bin every three weeks and also request a payment of £30 for an additional green bin, each household would continue to receive the first free of charge. Music lessons in schools could see financial support reduced or completely withdrawn. There is also the option for raising the overall Council Tax by 5% in an effort to head off some cuts. But WCBC Councillors are mindful of struggling families and the effect of an above inflation rate rise. Have your say by responding online www.wrexham.gov.uk/budgetconsultation by 30th November 2017. All responses are anonymous.

Under an "Invest to Save" grant it is understood that all street lighting will be converted to LED.

Questions to WCBC Councillors covered the following issues:-

- The hedge close to Glyn Wylfa on Castle Road is causing a serious pinch point for pavement users – to the point to walk two a breast that one person walks in the road. A recent incident has been reported to BC of a pedestrian being hit by a car mirror as there is so little room. It could even have been a child whose height could exact a blow to the head. Over 36,000 visitors are recorded annually and such a footpath is not fit for purpose. The hedge has been trimmed but a more radical look at this problem is needed.

- SW also notes a similar situation on Station Avenue where hedges are encroaching. In addition SW expressed concern over kerbstones running along Station Avenue being a health and safety hazard and should be looked into. The pavement is very narrow in places and the kerbs are at a 45° angle which often sees pedestrians toppling/slipping into the road.
- LP reports that the bus shelter on the B5070 opposite Lodgevale is to see the hedge trimmed back – it is taking over.
- Concern expressed over the new entrance onto Holyhead Road for Chirk Court Care Home. Members believe pedestrians have right of way when walking along Holyhead Road and traffic entering and leaving Chirk Court should respect this. It was thought a letter to Chirk Court themselves may see action to resolve this concern – rather than involving WCBC Highways at this point. Maybe signage for vehicle users would improve matters ? SJ to action.

92. TO REVIEW AND APPROVE REVISED RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING CHIRK CEMETERY.

A Working Party of Councillors has been undertaking a review with the Clerk to add more clarification and generally update the Cemetery Rules & Regulations. JA asked for an omission to be corrected concerning a statement that Council cannot be held responsible for any instances of theft in Chirk Cemetery. SJ will draft and circulate.

It was proposed by LP and seconded by DG the revised rules and regulations be now adopted. **Motion carried.**

93. TO RECEIVE INFORMATION ON REMEMBRANCE SERVICES AT CHIRK CENOTAPH – 11th & 12th NOVEMBER 2017.

SJ outlined arrangements being put in place, taking account that the Royal British Legion Social Club has recently closed. The landlord of the Stanton House Inn will offer refreshments after the Cenotaph Service – initially the Parish Hall was considered but maybe a little too far for some to walk to. Mr Geoff Edwards has been invited to participate in reading the list of WW1 fallen but this year is attending the ceremony in Penycrae. An idea to see if an ATC member would volunteer to read the WW1 names was being actively followed by Geoff as he is keen to involve the younger generations. TE and SW also suggested an approach to known residents who could assist – SJ will follow this up. The Police have requested 2 marshals to assist with the road closures – the Police do not have the manpower. FH and SJ have discussed and the initial thought is to ask if our caretakers would assist. Members were happy for this request to be made. The suggestion was also made that the PCSO meet ahead of the event to brief the marshals and advise what is expected of them. An approach to the Ifton Colliery Band who have recently taken up residency at Black Park Chapel to attend our ceremony has resulted in learning they are already booked to attend the Llay event but if a musician to play the Last Post/Reveille can be made available they would really like to help. Maybe in 2018 we can invite the whole band.

Our recent Churches Acts grant application has been successful - £500 towards improving Cenotaph lighting and provide for an electric socket on the island for PA equipment used at events.

94. TO HEAR RECENT REQUESTS CONCERNING THE SKATEPARK ON CHIRK RECREATION GROUND.

SJ had been contacted to request the flood light over the skate park be fixed. It had already been noted that the flood light had stopped coming on a few nights previous and MH was manually operating as the time clock had failed. It was a Saturday evening when the flood remained off and triggered the phone message. The text message conversation raised a request for refurbishing the skate park and also for the flood light to remain lit later – say 10 or 11pm. A discussion amongst Councillors ensued, BC noting significant levels of litter on Chirk Recreation Ground at certain times, cost of upkeep of 7 play areas in Chirk and SW offering to spearhead a dialogue on what improvements to the skate park may entail. SJ and SW will work on this and bring forward a report and proposal in the near future.

95. TO DECIDE UPON APPEALS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE RECEIVED.

A request for financial support from Black Park Community Centre trustees to help fulfil the terms and conditions of a recent WREN grant award to refurbish the roof of the centre. Such grants require some 3rd party funds being provided, in this case £3,326.27. It was proposed by TE and seconded by MM that a grant of £1,000 be made on the condition that all 3rd party funding is secured. Motion carried.

A request for financial support from Marie Curie Nurses covering this community. It was proposed a donation of £100 be made by TE and seconded by LP – motion carried.

84. TO RECEIVE THE ORAL REPORT OF THE CLERK – INCLUDES CORRESPONDENCE.

Summary of matters raised.

- Rent Smart Wales have now issued a Landlord Licence to Chirk Town Council. This now makes us fully compliant under Section 21 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014.
- After nominating Chirk Court Care Home in the Annual Wrexham Area Civic Society Awards for 2017 we have been advised that in the category of New Build they have received a Commendation. FH and SJ plan to attend the Awards evening on Friday 24th November 2017.
- A new Notice Board for Pentre is now ordered. Black Park have also requested that a Community Notice Board be arranged for their community. The external notice board at Chirk Parish Hall also needs to be replaced.
- The wood chips covering the play area on Offa have recently been mostly blown off – Storm Aileen mainly to blame. A long term solution is that the whole space be grassed over as we have had quotes earlier in the year to replenish the wood chips in the region of a £5,000 spend which if another storm comes through would be need to be spent again. Councillors agreed that grass is the better option but recognise that planting will have to wait until Spring 2018. SJ will advise our insurer of this in case they have any issue. Quotations for the work will be brought to members in due course.
- SJ advised Councillors that from the New Year all correspondence with Wrexham CBC Planners will be electronic. Currently we receive a hard copy of all planning applications we are consulted on. To enable this move Chirk Parish Hall should have a Data Projector available so that the Planning Committee can see the plan details up on screen. It was proposed by JA and seconded by SW that the procurement of a data projector be delegated to SJ. Motion carried.
- Ifton Colliery Band, now based at Black Park Chapel are wishing to apply for a WCBC Enabling Grant of £5,000 for the purchase of a set of tubular bells. A percussion instrument called for in some competition pieces. Chirk TC are asked to endorse the application. All members approved for SJ to add the support of Chirk TC to this grant application.
- The Chirk Branch of the Royal British Legion are asking Chirk Town Council to send a letter of support for plans to use 1 Hand Terrace as a Community Hub where 3rd sector and community groups can utilise a lounge meeting space there. Also an office for the Chirk RBL would be operating out of the same premises. This has all come about after the closing of the Chirk RBL Social Club and the building now placed on the market to repay indebtedness. 1 Hand Terrace is held in trust locally and will see a change of use from a domestic premises to commercial. Members agreed for the Clerk to send such a letter of support.

Correspondence:-

- **Bethan Griffiths – Local Black Park resident** – Advises of two issues, a council house used for temporary housing where occupiers are a concern and suggestion to curb speeding in the Third Street by installing a speed hump. **Noted – both matters are in the remit of Wrexham CBC – FH agreed to raise with the respective department.**
- **Name withheld** – Concern over potential breach of byelaws on Chapel Lane Recreation Ground. **Noted – byelaws still being researched and then a decision on best approach to advise user to cease activity.**
- **Boundary Commission for Wales** – Invitation to make representations over the latest proposals for Parliamentary Constituencies in Wales. **Noted.**
- **One Voice Wales** – Invitation to participate in a survey on the subject of Burial Authorities in Wales being asked if charges are made for burial of a child in their Cemetery. **Noted – survey completed – currently there are some fees for a child to be buried in Chirk Cemetery.**
- **Wrexham Public Service Board - The Wrexham We Want** – Invitation to comment on the two priorities in focus by 2nd January 2018. **Noted – Individual Councillors may submit comment on an individual basis.**
- **Marion Morris – Grave Space I10** – Holly tree will be properly contained. **Noted – Councillors appreciated the position in the round and were comfortable for the Clerk to accept the proposal for managing the holly tree going forward.**
- **Julie Houghton** – Rent Cemetery field for 2 ponies. **Councillors were unable to accede as the field has already been consecrated and were alert to the consequence of damage to the adjacent cemetery/church burial ground if the animals got out. The Clerk will write and advise.**

- **Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales** – Annual report 2018/19 – invitation to respond to proposals. **Noted – Clerk to send a response over concerns on how HMRC would view an annual payment to each Town Councillor – adding to our existing payroll system would be overkill.**
- **Chirk AAA Ltd** – Notice of Organised Bonfire & Firework Event Sunday 5th November 2017. **Noted.**
- **Welsh Government** – Draft Guidance for Principal Councils on the Review of Communities – invitation to submit views on the report by 21st December 2017. **Noted.**
- **Welsh Government** – Town & Village Greens, revision of regulations concerning provision to allow end use as a town or village green. Opportunity to comment by 2nd February 2018. **Noted.**

85. TO CONSIDER PLANNING APPLICATIONS P/2017/0813 & 0814 – 1 AND 2 HOME FARM COTTAGES, CHIRK CASTLE, CHIRK.

P/2017/0813 Listed Building Consent For The Installation Of 2 No. Air Source Heat Pumps (To Rear Of Properties)

1 And 2 Home Farm Cottages Chirk Castle Chirk Wrexham LL14 5AE

Comments: Members were happy to leave to the Conservation Officer to determine whether the applicant's proposals are in keeping. Agrees to approve on this basis.

P/2017/0814 Installation Of 2 No. Air Source Heat Pumps (To Rear Of Properties)

1 And 2 Home Farm Cottages Chirk Castle Chirk Wrexham LL14 5AE

Comments: Members were happy to leave to the Conservation Officer to determine whether the applicant's proposals are in keeping. Agrees to approve on this basis.

86. TO REVIEW H1 EXPENDITURE AGAINST BUDGET AND BANK RECONCILIATION REPORT

SJ guided members through both reports. Members approval given.

87. TO APPROVE PAYMENTS TO BE MADE AS ON LIST ATTACHED.

A list of invoices and payments (to 25.10.17) amounting to £12,002.28 & £82.07 (using pre-paid creditcard) was given to the Council and were passed for payment (see addendum). All members approved.

88. TO PRESENT ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON THE NEXT AGENDA.

None presented.

Meeting closed 9:25pm.

Signed

Chairman

29th November 2017