



CHIRK TOWN COUNCIL CYNGOR TREF Y WAUN

MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING HELD 28TH OCTOBER 2020 held virtually on-line over video /telephone conferencing

Present

Cllrs. Mr Brian Colley (BC) - Chairman,
Mrs Barbara Humphreys (BH),
Ms Eleanor Burnham (EB),
Mr Terry Evans (TE),
Mr Mark Roberts (MR) and

Mrs Jackie Allen (JA),
Mr Newman James (NJ),
Mrs Dot Griffiths (DG),
Mr Chris Burgoyne (CB),
Mr Frank Hemmings (FH),

Mr Gareth Baines (GB),
Mrs Sarah Williams (SW),
Miss Lynne Painter (LP),
Mr Michael Maxfield (MM),

Also in attendance:

Mrs Karen Brown (KB) - Clerk to the Council,
Mrs Rebecca Ap Gwyn (RAG) – Administration Officer
Mr Jack Butler - Press

BC reminded Councillors of the Code of Conduct and the duty of care to each other and to all Council staff.

27. To Accept Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr. Mr Mark Holmes.

28. To make Declarations of Interest on items on the agenda

None.

29. To confirm and sign the minutes as a true record of the Annual Meeting held on 30th September 2020

The minutes were reviewed. The following amendments were made:

Item 14/185 should read communication is 'appalling' not appealing, and the name in item 19 should read 'Tim Graycoles'. With these two amendments SW proposed that the minutes be approved as a true account. FH seconded the proposal. All agreed.

30. To consider any matters arising from the minutes received above not reported elsewhere

Item 20 - Community Agent Hours – the hours of the Community Agent were reviewed. JA proposed to keep the 16-20 flexible hours for another month. EB seconded the proposal. All agreed.

Item 14/180 – Surgery/Pharmacy – Members discussed the ongoing complaints. JA reported that if people want to make a complaint there is a complaint guide booklet or a pdf form on the Community Health Council (CHC) website. JA confirmed that the CHC is a statutory body in Wales to represent health services and is not linked in any way to the Town Council. SW reported that she had not experienced any problems and thought that the Surgery was following the government guidelines. The Council agreed to write to Chris Stockport Director of Primary Care, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, copying in Gill Harris – Acting Chief Officer, BCUHB and request a response within fourteen days. If a response is not received then it can be escalated to Vaughan Gething, Health Minister.

Action: Clerk to draft letter.

Members still had concerns about the Pharmacy with the cold weather approaching.

Item 24 – Longfields Play Area – A quote had been received for the CCTV at Longfields, details shared, £700 + VAT for the supply and installation of the camera and £150 for the electrical connection into the lamppost. It was agreed that a decision be taken by the Finance Committee once the current budget position was understood. It was agreed that if the budget allowed then the work could go ahead.

31. To receive oral reports from Council Representatives

JA reported that at the One Voice Wales Area Committee AGM, she was re-elected as Chair. The meeting discussed speakers to invite to future meetings and it was agreed that Mr Ian Bancroft, Chief Executive of Wrexham Council and Dr Chris Stockport of BCUHB would be invited.

32. To receive oral reports from Local Members – Wrexham CBC

TE reported that the Police have attended Offas Dyke and all work has stopped. CADW is working up a case for prosecution. GB added that the reason the work had begun was that the CADW 'stop notice' had expired.

TE also reported that the fly tipping had stopped and that COVID19 cases were on the increase in Wrexham. NJ asked about the Wrexham testing facility at the Memorial Hall – the website is showing that it is a drive through test centre, but it is not. TE will check this information.

Green bin collections from Wrexham take ten days from receipt of payment for the collection to commence.

FH reported that the Burger Van is going through the appropriate planning process.

TE reminded Members of the new Resilient Grant which went live today. LP feedback that she found the process of applying for the grants very complicated, complex and confusing. This was acknowledged.

33. To report on the recent Chirk Environmental Liaison Group and response from Kronospan

BC reported that it was a poor quality meeting as the video conference software did not allow for full participation. Members present at the meeting expressed a variety of views. BC took the Council through the main points:

- Quarterly meetings – agreed
- Venue – Parish Hall – agreed
- Appointment of Independent Chair – agreed to be independent, but concerns raised over who would be suitable for such role and the process of appointment would need to be agreed by the new Liaison group. GB suggested the Environment Editor of the Guardian is a local resident and could be approached for such a role. It was suggested that any suitable nominations should be taken to the Environment Liaison Group Meeting.
- Membership of Chirk Town Council on the new Liaison Group – detailed discussion took place as Kronospan wanted a Chirk Town Council membership of four including the two Wrexham Elected Members. This was a reduction from the four Chirk Town Council Members plus two Wrexham Elected Members. Members suggested rotating the membership, however this would create a lack of consistency. Currently the Vice Chair is also the Elected Member so this takes out one position. It was suggested that a pre-meeting of all Town Councillors could be held to prepare for each quarterly Liaison Group meeting in order to share a consistent message. Members felt quite strongly that Kronospan was getting their own way. However, it was also acknowledged that a compromise would be needed. CB proposed to reject the membership proposal and keep to the four Town Councillors plus two Elected Members. SW seconded the proposal. All agreed.

SW added a further proposal that should Kronospan not accept the six in total, then a reduction to five would be considered acceptable. EB seconded the proposal. All agreed.

- Name of Group – Members did not agree with the name, but recognised that this was in line with NRW guidance and reluctantly agreed.

In view of the serious technical problems experienced at the Liaison meeting, it was suggested that as Chirk Town Council has a Zoom Licence, it would be willing to host the Liaison meetings under this licence.

SW suggested that headsets could be purchased for Members using Zoom at the Parish Hall.

Action: Clerk to look into costs and take to a Finance Committee meeting.

GB sought clarity on how the six members of Liaison group will be chosen. It was confirmed that appointment to the new Liaison group would need to be a full Council decision.

34. To discuss the future of the Parish Hall

EB raised concern about the future of the Parish Hall which has been closed since March 2020; it is costing a lot of money to run and the Council needs to consider the future costs in relation to the Precept and asked was now a good time to consider its future. DG felt that the Parish Hall had been a community facility for many years and can not see the community wanting it to go. EB said that the community would need to be consulted on any major considerations, but the Council must look at the financial situation.

BC stated that, in fact, the Parish Hall does not cost a lot of money to run. Under normal conditions (prior to the current COVID restrictions) income is approximately £20K and running costs are approximately £35K resulting in a net cost of £15K. However if the Council was to move its six members of staff who are currently located at the Parish Hall to another property, the costs would be at least £1,000 per month for a minimum of three rooms including a meeting room.

BC added that he was confident that room bookings would return once restrictions had been lifted. The Council owe it to the community of Chirk to look after the Parish Hall.

FH stated that Chirk is very lucky to have such a building as other communities have lost their community buildings. Members suggested that we could improve income revenue. JA stated that the Parish Hall is going to cost large amounts in the near future to undertake some of the external works. SW stated that the building is looking fantastic after the upgrade during lockdown and its an iconic building in Chirk, however she would like to see the Hall modernised to encourage more people to use it.

As there were such varying views, it was agreed to discuss this matter further at a future General Purposes Committee.

35. To discuss how to support the children's bike track in the woods

SW told Members about the bike track for 9-18 year olds and asked what the Council can do to support and work with the children to help them develop the track. TE said that it was a great idea; the track is on National Trust land and it could be developed as a community project. JA agreed it was a great idea and said that the National Trust and Kronospan would need to be involved to discuss safety and liability on their land, therefore, the Council can not commit to anything. If the National Trust land it not suitable then the Council could approach Brynkinalt.

GB proposed to speak to Trevor Bates in the Ceriog Valley to find out how best to approach the project as they have done something similar. The Council agreed for this approach to be made and to try and get things moving. However if this approach drew a blank then it would be brought back to a General Purposes Committee for further exploration.

36. To receive the report of the Clerk – includes updates, correspondence, speed sign data

The Clerk went through key updates, meetings and events attended. Details on re-opening the Parish Hall and progress on the health and safety audit was provided. The migration to Office 365 was overall very successful except for one incident which meant that the Chirk Town Council website was brought down, however the backup website (www.chirk.info) has been restored. The Council is already aware that the website does not meet current Welsh Government Regulations and a brief discussion took place about options for a new website.

Speed sign data – The Clerk presented the latest data from Station Avenue which showed the V85 at 28mph and that almost 8% of drivers were over the speed limit. The Clerk had received a quote for six additional speed sign brackets which would cost £345 plus VAT. The Council unanimously agreed to purchase these brackets. **Action:** Clerk to order brackets.

37. To decide upon appeals for financial assistance received

- The Poppy Appeal – General donation requested from the Chirk Branch, Royal British Legion. TE proposed a donation of £500, CB seconded the proposal. All agreed.
- Family Friends – General donation requested. JA proposed to not support this appeal. TE seconded the proposal. All agreed.
- Ifton Colliery Band – General donation requested. DJ proposed a £500 donation, NJ seconded the proposal. All agreed.

Action: Clerk to notify outcome of their appeals.

38. To note planning applications dealt through the Planning Committee

Members of Planning Committee recommended no objections to the following.

- P/2020/0562 – Erection of a replacement dwelling - 2A Llwyn Y Cil Chirk Wrexham
- P/2020/0558 – Two storey side extension - 25 Cilcoed Lodgevale, Chirk

The Council has no objection to the presented applications.

39. To present items for inclusion on the next agenda

NJ wanted to agree a date for the first Emergency Planning sub committee – it was agreed that it would be held on 4th November 2020.

Members asked about Remembrance Sunday and what the Council could do to prevent people from attending. It was agreed that the Council would issue a statement on social media, asking people to avoid 11am on Sunday. The Clerk updated Councillors on the arrangements for Remembrance Sunday. Members asked if they could attend the service on Sunday. The Clerk confirmed that the Chair and Vice Chairman would be representing the Council and sadly other Members were asked to remain at home. Members of the public can attend the Cenotaph at any time over the weekend. One representative from each organisation who have ordered a wreath have been invited. We are confident that we will be under the maximum of 30. Test and trace data will be collected from all attending. The Police have been informed of our plans.

CB asked about food banks and if Chirk had considered having one. FH said that Chirk have good links with Oswestry food bank. The Community Agent works with the food bank if individuals/families have been identified in Chirk. NJ stated that Chirk Charities support food donations at Christmas and highlighted the stigma associated with food banks – people don't want to be seen accessing them in their local area.

FH highlighted that Erddig is doing a reverse grotto where people turn up with a donation.

TE reported how impressed he is with the condition of the Cemetery, with 235 fantastic comments and would like to praise the people who maintain in.

SW asked if the Council would make a small donation for sweets for Santa. This was agreed.

Toffee apple appeal was highlighted and the Council agreed to sponsor a box of toffee apples.

Action: Clerk to purchase a box of toffee apples and sweets for Santa.

Meeting closed 21:10

Signed

Chairman

Date