

NORTHOP COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Northop Community Council held remotely via Zoom Pro on Monday 8th March, 2021

PRESENT: Councillors Pauline Lawton-Hughes, Linda Scott, Linda Deane, Marion Bateman, Alison Brebner, Jarred Livesey, Rob Mackey, Alan Watkin, Jo Millar, Rachel Hayward, John Carlin and the Clerk.

APOLOGIES: There were no apologies.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made by members.

2. POLICE MATTERS

The Clerk shared with Members the emailed update which she had received from PCSO Ryan Thomas.

Northop

- **04/02/21** – The Police received a report of a male, walking alone into Northop acting suspiciously, looking very agitated and acting unusual. Officers patrolled the area but there were no sightings and no further calls.
- **06/02/21** – The Police received a report of a large group of youths in the Pwll y Gaseg woods. Officers arrived and spoke to the youths who were advised to return home. There were no further calls.
- **25/02/21** – A caller reported suspicious activity to her property on St Peters Park, Northop. A male had driven into the avenue, got out of his car and started looking around her campervan which was parked on her property. The Police provided reassurance. As the caller who reported the activity had pictures of male, officers were able to circulate the images throughout the force, in hope for identification and information has also been circulated on Facebook to raise awareness.

Sychdyn

- 20/02/21 Caller reported a few white vans in the rural back lanes of Coed Uchaf woods which had been acting suspicious. Officers have been made aware and are currently patrolling the area.
- 27/02/21 The Police were informed of a large group of youths in the park near to Sychdyn CP School. Officers arrived but nobody was present and there were no further calls.
- 01/03/21 The Police received a report regarding a large amount of fly tipping near Hall Lane. Officers attended and having taken images contacted Flintshire County Council, who have attended and removed all the rubbish.

3. MINUTES

Councillor Brebner noted that under Agenda Item 11 NHS, Social Care & Frontline Workers Day 5th July 2021 Page 5, the Minutes had stated that the National Care Organisation was a public limited company, when they should have read private limited company. The Clerk agreed to amend the minutes accordingly. Subject to the amendment being made, it was resolved that the Minutes be accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting. All Members were in agreement.

Matters Arising

Agenda Item 4 Streetscene Issues

Councillor Deane reported a fly-tipping matter. A small vehicle size car shelf had been left close to 79 St Peters Park, on the opposite side of the hedge at Ffordd Owen. Councillor Bateman agreed to arrange for its removal.

Councillor Livesey asked whether there had been any update on the fly-tipping both he and the Clerk had reported between Northop and Flint Mountain. Councillor Bateman suggested that Councillor Livesey forward her the details of the location and she would look into it but confirmed that should the fly-tipping at this location be on private land, it would be the responsibility of the landowner to remove it and not Flintshire County Council.

Councillor Bateman also confirmed that the fly-tipping of large quantities of sealant tubs and other items near Soughton Hall had been removed however, there was nothing amongst the rubbish to identify those responsible. Overnight on the 7th March, several bags were fly-tipped at the same sight and at the junction of Main Road and Hall Lane. This has also been removed.

Councillor Mackey noted that when reporting any incidents of fly-tipping, the location must be accurate and that the 'what three words' app gives the exact location within three metres.

Councillor Carlin commended those responsible for undertaking regular litter picks between Northop and Sychdyn and Councillor Bateman informed members that it was a small number of Sychdyn residents, who undertake the litter pick daily and leave the bags for either herself or Councillor Haydn Bateman to pick up and take to a collection point, where they are removed daily. Members thanked both Councillor Marion Bateman and Councillor Haydn Bateman for their assistance.

4. STREETSCENE ISSUES

Northop

- (a) Councillor Mackey confirmed that the street lighting improvements in Park View, Northop had been undertaken.

- (b) Councillor Carlin reported that one of the traffic lights at the main junction in Northop was not operating (the set as you approach from the College to Northop). It was resolved that the Clerk would contact Streetscene, Flintshire County Council urgently to report the issue.

5. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- (a) To consider the following planning applications:

(i) **062432**

PROPOSAL: Orangery extension at the Celtic Arms

AT: The Celtic Arms, Northop Country Park, Northop, Mold, Flintshire CH7 6WA

(There were no objections raised to this proposal by Northop Community Council).

(ii) **062378**

PROPOSAL: Erection of climbing shed attached to gable end of house

AT: 5-6 Quarry Cottages, Quarry Lane, Soughton, Mold, Flintshire CH7 6EG

(There were no objections raised to this proposal by Northop Community Council).

(iii) **062447**

PROPOSAL: Proposed indoor caravan storage with existing structure at Tyddyn Ucha – change of use

AT: Tyddyn Ucha Farm, Raikes Lane, Sychdyn, Mold, Flintshire CH7 6LR

(There were no objections raised to this proposal by Northop Community Council).

- (b) The Council accepted correspondence from Flintshire County Council's Head of Planning regarding planning applications on which the Council had previously submitted observations.

- (i) **060220** –Proposed residential development for the erection of 92 dwellings including the provision of affordable units, areas of public open space, landscaping and associated works at land to the south of New Brighton, Mold, Flintshire (Objections were made by Northop Community Council)

Councillor Bateman confirmed that the planning appeal for the 92 residential dwellings on land to the south of New Brighton had been dismissed by the Planning Inspectorate, on the basis of the lack of play space to be identified, the lack of a safe route to school and as it was outside the village curtilage. The Chair thanked Councillor Bateman for her letter of objections to the proposal as Local Member.

6. ACCOUNTS

- (a) To approve the payment of the following accounts:-

(i) **Clerks Salary – March 2021 Mrs S C Lovell at £724.98 (Net); Cheque Number 002280**

(ii) **HMRC – Income Tax in respect of Clerk's salary paid March 2021 at £62.20; Cheque Number 002281**

- (iii) **Clwyd Pension Fund** Employers & Employee Pension contribution for Clerk March 2021 at **£185.15; Cheque Number 002282**
- (iv) **Flintshire County Council** Street Lighting Maintenance 16/02/2021 at **£146.05; Cheque Number 002283;**
- (v) **AGM Tree Surgery** – Tree felling at Northop Car Park and preparation of Planning Application at **£790; Cheque Number 002284**
- (vi) **Craig Lockley** – Repair of roof at Bus Shelter Northop at **£180.00; Cheque Number 002285**
- (vii) **Flintshire County Council** Street Lighting for work carried out at Blackbrook, Northop at **£3737.07; Cheque Number 002286**
- (viii) **Flintshire County Council** Public Rights of Way Match Funding at **£750; Cheque Number 002287**

Councillor Watkin proposed that all the accounts be approved and this was seconded by Councillor Mackey. All Members were in agreement.

- (b) Members agreed to the payment of the invoice for repair works that had been undertaken by Craig Lockley Roofing Services.

7. MATTERS RAISED BY MEMBERS

- (a) The matter of fly-tipping raised by Councillor Livesey were discussed under Matters Arising.
- (b) Councillor Carlin reported having seen evidence of cable ties on the fencing to his Property which he stated is indicative of properties being watched as you own dogs and advised that dog thieves are active in the area.

8. TRAFFIC MATTERS

Councillor Brebner reported that there was no further update at present regarding the Community Council's request for signage between Northop village and the College and that the matter was ongoing.

Councillor Brebner had been approached by a local resident regarding the Welsh Government's plan which will ensure all roads with street lights will default to 20mph in 2023, requesting that the Community Council consider their support for the scheme and encourage the local authority to look at it and identify which roads in Northop should be nominated. The road from the roundabout off the A55 to the pelican crossing in Northop had been suggested, as drivers regularly approach the crossing at speed and also the High Street. Councillor Bateman confirmed that all roads with street lights in Wales will be assessed.

Councillor Brebner suggested that the County Council be contacted to inform them of the Community Council support for this initiative. It was resolved that the Clerk would write to with Mr Sam Tulley, Streetscene, Flintshire County Council regarding the approach.

Councillor Livesey enquired as to whether there were any plans for parking in Ffordd Gwynedd. Councillor Bateman informed members that as part of an ongoing project, Flintshire County Council were installing hard standings in front of all Council housing and pensioners bungalows in Northop, to reduce the need for cars to park on the road.

The Council have completed similar works in Sychdyn and residents were pleased with the outcome.

9. UPDATE ON THE A55/A494/A548 - DEESIDE CORRIDOR PROJECT

Councillor Scott had requested that the Clerk circulate a copy of the Petitions Committee Report to members prior to the meeting. Councillor Brebner updated members stating that the report identified six clear recommendations and that the Chair of the Petitions Committee had requested that the Welsh Assembly provide a formal response prior to the Easter recess if feasible.

Councillor Bateman reported that she had attended a meeting on the 2nd March 2021 with representatives of the Welsh Government Trunk Road Agency regarding the crawler lane from Northop to Halkyn. It is currently at the early feasibility stage and will be complimentary to the Red Route which is unofficially on hold. It is hoped that by July 2022 the business case will commence, with the aim of commencing construction in 2023/24 at an estimated cost of £5 million. There will also be improvements to existing substandard junctions and some will close. Councillor Bateman raised the matter of diversion routes whilst the work is undertaken and stated that they will need to be considered carefully, as there will be much disruption. Local Members will be regular updated.

Councillor Brebner had been approached by a resident who had been trying to contact Hannah Blythyn MS, to express their views regarding the Red Route. Members discussed the matter and it was resolved that the Clerk would write to Hannah Blythyn MS to request a response to the constituent's enquiries and also to ascertain her views on the Red Route as Assembly Member.

10. SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURE FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDING 31st MARCH 2020 AND BUDGET FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2021/22**

Councillors had been provided with a copy of the summary of actual expenditure for the financial year 2021/22, the final Quarterly Report of the financial year 2020/21 and the proposed budget for 2021/22.

- (a) The Clerk as Registered Finance Officer presented the summary of the budget expenditure summary for the financial year ending the 31st March, 2021 and reported that the total expenditure for 2020/21 will be £31,727. £47,441 had been allocated for expenditure for 2020/21 which leaves a significant variance in the budget of £15,000. Based on the variance, the Clerk as Responsible Finance Officer had made adjustments in the proposed budget for 2021/22 to try and limit the variance.
- (b) The Clerk discussed the proposed budget for 2021/22 and members agreed that they resolved that:
 - £250 should be included in the budget expenditure for 2021/22 for future Public Rights of Way match funding improvements; Councillor Mackey noted that there are areas around Maes y Grug that are likely to need an upgrade to the stiles in the future;
 - That £500 for improvements to the Sychdyn Play Area should be carried forward from the financial year 2020/21 and earmarked as a reserve for 2021/22.

Members agreed that they would not allocate any expenditure for the playground improvements for 2021/22, as Councillor Millar had advised that at present there were no identified improvements to be made;

- Agreed that it would be possible to fund both the repair work for the gully at Northop Car Park (dependent on the cost of quote opted for) and the Sychdyn streetlighting improvements. It was acknowledged that this would mean that the general reserves would be reduced and monies may need to be transferred from the Business Reserve Account however, 50% of the Precept (£19, 500) would be maintained within the Business Reserve Account;
- Councillor Bateman requested that £2000 be allocated in the budget for 2021/22 for a VAS sign for Sychdyn village;

Councillor Bateman suggested that the street lights that require improvements in Sychdyn be reassessed, as some may have been completed already and that this may affect the quote of £8262 for the work to be completed which was a figure provided some time ago.

It was resolved that the Clerk would liaise with Jamie Bennett, Operational Manager for Street Lighting at Flintshire County Council and request a reassessment of the street lights that require improvements in Sychdyn and an updated cost of the works.

11. ASSET REGISTER

Members had been sent a copy of the amended Risk Assessment with the meeting papers, prior to the meeting. Councillor Watkin queried whether the valuation for laptop was the replacement value or the value of the existing device. It was resolved that the Clerk would check the valuation with the insurers Zurcuh and amend the register accordingly. Members ratified the register based on the figure being checked and amended.

12. MANAGEMENT PLAN - NORTHOP CAR PARK & ENVIRONS**

- (a) Councillor Mackey stated that all companies approached to provide a quote had been given the same specification and brief set out by Barnard Engineering Ltd. Councillors commented on the wide range of costs when comparing quotes. The Clerk informed members that there was one outstanding quote. It was resolved that the matter be discussed at the next meeting, when all quotes had been received and that the Clerk contact GSL to request that they resubmit their quote, providing a full breakdown of costs. All Councillors were in agreement.
- (b) The Clerk confirmed that the tree felling at Northop Car Park had been undertaken by Mr Rob Monshin, AGM Tree Surgey and that he had invoiced the Council for the work completed. Councillor Deane reported that members of the public had been very complimentary regarding the work.

13. COMPACC COMPLETE ACCOUNTANCY SERVICES UK LTD**

The Clerk had been informed by Compacc Complete Accountancy Services UK Ltd that

from April 2021 they are moving to Cloud based payroll software and will be increasing the cost to be able to continue to provide their services to 'one person' schemes. The fees will be £10 for running the payroll scheme plus the £9 per payslip which equates to £228 per annum as of 2021/22, as opposed to the £109 per annum paid to date.

It was resolved that the Clerk would compare this cost with the cost of alternative 'one person' schemes and the Chair would request information from the treasurer at Sychdyn Village Hall.

14. BUS SHELTER NORTHOP

Councillor Deane had reported to the Clerk that she had noticed that there were slates that had fallen from the bus shelter roof and on further examination other slates appeared loose. Having liaised with the Chair, it was agreed that due to the risk to the public using the shelter, to pedestrians and vehicles, an expert ought to be contacted to undertake an assessment and repair work urgently. Craig Lockley Roofing Repairs was contacted and he assessed the damage and work to be undertaken on the same day and completed the repair work the following day. This involved replacing several slates and pointing the gable ends of the roof. Mr Lockley did advise that the roof may need significant repair work within the next five years.

15. SYCHDYN PLAY AREA

Members discussed whether they wished to pursue the match funding scheme with Flintshire County Council, for upgrading play equipment at Sychdyn Play Area in the future and whether they wished to set aside monies in future budgets to plan for this.

Councillor Millar stated that at present the Sychdyn Association had no funds set aside to contribute towards any possible future maintenance, as the pandemic had meant that there had been no opportunity to hold the Sychdyn Carnival in 2020 to fundraise and this may also be the case for 2021. Councillor Millar felt that at present there were no improvements that needed to be undertaken and has informed Mr Richard Roberts, Aura Leisure and Libraries. Should the situation change, the Sychdyn association would contact Aura and if necessary, obtain a second opinion regarding costings and approach the Community Council to request financial assistance.

The Clerk informed members that there is currently £500 earmarked in the reserves budget for future improvements at Sychdyn Play Area and that there were monies available in the budget should members decide to set further funds aside in 2021/22 to future improvements.

Members agreed that they would be guided by Councillor Millar's overview and resolved that they would hold the £500 earmarked reserved for the improvements in the budget should it be needed and would consider any future requests from the Sychdyn Association, as and when they arose and not allocate any additional monies in the budget for 2021/22. It was resolved that the Clerk would write to Mr Richard Roberts and inform him of the decision not to pursue the match funding for 2021/22.

16. NOTICE OF CO-OPTION

- (a) The Clerk informed members that the co-option notice had ended on the 3rd March 2021 and that there had been interest expressed from members of the Sychdyn community and one formal written expression of interest received. The Clerk had provided members with the applicants details and statement of expression of interest prior to the meeting.
- (b) Councillors discussed the arrangements for the co-option interview process and agreed that the interview panel should comprise the Chair, Vice Chair and another Sychdyn member, Councillor Bateman. It was resolved that a date for the interview would be arranged by the Clerk and interview panel.

13. COUNCILLOR VACANCY – SYCHDYN WARD

The Clerk reported that the Councillor Vacancy Notice would be advertised up until 5pm On Friday 12th March at 5pm. Council would then be advised of whether there had been sufficient members of the public request an election or whether the next step in the process would be co-option. It was resolved the Clerk would update members following the 12th March.

18. RESIDENT'S AND YOUNG CITIZEN'S AWARDS

- (a) Councillor Lawton-Hughes informed the Council that there had been one nomination for the Citizen's Awards and two nominations for the Resident's Awards. Council agreed with the decisions of the selection panel for the awards. Members discussed the purchase of a gift to accompany the certificate to be awarded to the successful recipients and it was agreed that the Clerk would purchase the gifts and prepare and frame the required certificates.
- (b) Members agreed that at present due to the pandemic, it was difficult to make the necessary arrangements for the presentations of the awards. It was agreed that the matter would be discussed at the April meeting, as further information may have been received by then regarding the lockdown in Wales. It was resolved that the decision of the selection panel should remain confidential at present.

Councillor Millar and Councillor Bateman had to leave the meeting at 8.30pm due to prior engagements.

19. REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT **

Members considered requests for financial support for Hope House and Ty Gobaith Children's Hospices and also Macmillan Cancer Support. It was resolved that the Community Council budget for community donations should be focused on more local organisations and events and that it was becoming increasingly difficult to assist all causes financially as the budget is limited, yet request for donations from more national organisations are received on a regular basis. Councillor Mackey proposed that members formally accept the letters and the Council were in agreement.

16. FOR INFORMATION

- a) The Clerk reported that the Council had received the Internal Audit Plan for 2021/22.
- (b) The Clerk updated members on the One Voice Wales new draft Code of Conduct however, members advised that Northop Community Council have adopted the Code of Conduct produced by Flintshire County Council.
- (c) The Clerk shared the One Voice Wales update regarding virtual meetings and members agreed they would be guided by the advice of the Welsh Government when it is produced.

The meeting ended at 8.45pm

**IN ACCORDANCE WITH NORTHOP COMMUNITY COUNCIL'S
CODE OF CONDUCT**

COUNCIL MEETING	DATE: 8th March, 2021
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There were no new declarations of interest made at the meeting.

MEMBER	ITEM	MIN. NO. REFERS