

NORTHOP COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Northop Community Council held at the Memorial Institute, Northop on Monday 14th January, 2019.

PRESENT: Councillors Linda Deane (Chairman), Pauline Lawton-Hughes (Vice-Chairman), Marion Bateman, Alison Brebner, John Carlin, Rachel Hayward, Jo Millar, Rob Mackey, Chris Ruddle, Linda Scott and the Clerk. Also in attendance were Geraint Roberts, Streetscene Area Coordinator, Flintshire County Council (FCC) and Ms. Phillipa Earlam, Lay Member Flintshire County Council's Standards Committee.

APOLOGIES: Received from Councillors Paul Ashley, Jarred Livesey and Alan Watkin.

The Chairman extended a welcome to Phillipa Earlam and Geraint Roberts.

Phillipa Earlam introduced herself as a Lay Member of FCC's Standards Committee and explained the programme of visits to Community & Town Councils (CTC). The purpose of the visits are to provide a clearer picture for the Standards Committee of the challenges facing the CTCs, to identify training needs, and to raise the profile of the Standards Committee. It was also recognised that the role of a Clerk is now a more onerous one.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No Declaration of Interest were made.

2. POLICE MATTERS

The Clerk reminded members of the alerts by OWL of thefts from vehicles across North Wales. No other Police matters were raised at the meeting.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Council meeting of the 10th December, 2018 were confirmed as a true record subject to the addition at Item 8, to reference the decision to transfer an appropriate sum of money from the Council's Current Account into the Business Reserve Account to maximise income from interest on reserves.

Matters arising

Item 4: The damaged dog waste bin at Sychdyn school will be replaced and the siting of a second bin explored.

Item 7 (b): Geraint Roberts (GR) reported that the land in question at the junction of Ffordd Las and Maes Gwalia, Sychdyn did not appear on FCC's Streetscene ownership database. Northop members accepted GR's offer to refer the matter to the Legal department to investigate/clarify.

Item 9: Geraint Roberts offered to chase progress on the reinstatement of wiring etc. at the former BT phone kiosk outside the Red Lion pub in Northop.

Item 11: Cllr. Mackey would give further thought to the wording of a supporting statement to be included in the planning application for the Northop Car Park and Environs Management Plan. Cllr Mackey and the Clerk would look to complete the necessary planning application form.

4. STREETSCENE ISSUES

Geraint Roberts (GR) gave a brief outline of his career to date and how he arrived to be the Streetscene Area Co-ordinator responsible for the Flint, Bagillt, Flint Mountain, Northop, Northop Hall and Sychdyn areas. GR explained the on-going process of reviewing the hierarchy of roads within the network and the criteria for road surface repairs. GR explained that potholes deeper than 40mm must be filled/patched as a priority, e.g. the reported potholes on St. Peter's Park and Northop High Street. GR also explained the system for reporting faults to Streetscene, by telephone (01352-701234), via the Council's website or mobile app. FCC operate a 24hr work pattern to be able to undertake repairs at times of least traffic. Out of hours emergencies should be reported by telephone to the above number.

Members accepted GR's offer that he attends council meetings more frequently to work towards solutions for the community. Members felt that it was also important that Road Safety had a part to play in addressing some issues relating to the local road network, and in particular speeding vehicles. GR offered to arrange with LS. Cllr. Carlin called for FCC to adjust their budget priorities to better address road safety and road conditions.

The following issues were discussed with Geraint Roberts (GR) it was agreed that he would investigate the following issues:

- Speeding traffic in Raikes Lane/Blackbrook area of Sychdyn. Cllr. Lawton-Hughes recounted a recent incident when a car was travelling so fast around the corner from Raikes Lane into Blackbrook that the driver lost control and his car hit a parked vehicle on Blackbrook. A resident was on the pavement at the time and had to push their child into the hedge so as to avoid being hit by the speeding car.
- Cllr. Brebner enquired further about the situation with a Traffic Regulation Order to allow the GoSafe camera van to park and be active along the B5126 in the area of the college campus. GR to chase progress with Road Safety (LS).
- The requested addition of a right turn filter light to be added to the crossroad traffic lights at Northop. GR to chase progress with Streetlighting (DJ).
- Cllr. Carlin asked that the following receive attention:
 - Cleaning out of the gullies on the A5119/High Street junction and remove the blockage on the High Street side. GR agreed to increase the frequency of gully cleaning in this area which is affected by a high autumn leaf fall, to twice a year.
 - Reinstatement of the road markings on the approaches to and around the crossroad area. The markings are currently considered dangerously faint. GR agreed to deal with this matter which will be included in the 2019-20 budget.
 - The hedges at around the Bryn Offa/Alltami junction are restricting views. An accident occurred recently in this area. GR agreed to deal with the matter of the hedges and noted that landowners have between

November and March to cut hedges but that a farmer has the right not to disturb nesting birds.

- GR advised that he had no evidence to hand that indicated ownership of the triangular piece of land at the junction of Ffordd Las/Maes Gwalia, Sychdyn. However, he would, at the Community Council's request, ask for further clarification from FCC's legal department.
- Confirmation of the terms of the Bulk Collection Service with regards to whether all 5 items had to be collected in one visit or whether the £40 fee was for multiple collections, up to a maximum of 5 items. GR would also enquire whether any discount applied to pensioner and forward his response to the Clerk to share.

It was agreed that the Clerk would invite GR and LS the February council meeting to discuss road safety related streetscene issues. (Later in the meeting it was considered that the March meeting would be more appropriate. See Item 5.)

Cllr. Mackey reported that the recent work by Streetscene on the Back Footpath had made a significant positive difference. Geraint Roberts was thanked for his hard work for the local community.

Members also reported lighting defects as follows:

- Some lights on St. Peter's Park had been replaced with LED lights. The spread of light from LEDs is narrower than from the older type of lantern and this has led to some dark spots in coverage, e.g. although there is a light outside number 76 St. Peter's Park, there is a dark spot towards the junction with Ffordd Owen.
- Lamp at Manor Park – 1st on the right of the road.
- Lamp located on the same side as, and beyond the Cricket Club, towards the A55 – unit door is missing exposing wiring.

The Clerk to report the lighting faults to FCC.

5. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

(a) The following planning application was considered and observations agreed to be submitted to Flintshire County Council's (FCC) Head of Planning:

- (i) **CEM/059145** – PROPOSAL: Change of use to a childminding business at Cobblers Wood Farm, Red House, Soughton, CH7 6RH.

The Council had no objection to the proposed development.

(b) Council received and noted information from Flintshire County Council's Head of Planning on planning applications on which the Council has previously submitted observations.

- (i) **059088 –PROPOSAL:** Erection of a porch and side extension with internal alterations at 18 Pen Y Pentre, Sychdyn. Approved. Delegated Officer decision - 04/12/18.

(c) Members reported that site traffic to and from the Ffordd Eldon site continued to operate out of the stated hours in the Traffic Management Plan. Cllr. Bateman had

attended numerous meetings at County Hall with residents and FCC's Planning and Legal Services to seek to resolve this and other issues. Members agreed with Cllr. Bateman suggested that the planning enforcement manager should be requested to attend the February council meeting to explain what actions are being taken by FCC to control the action of Stuart Milne Homes. The Clerk to contact FCC. If the Planning Service Officer is able to attend the February meeting, the Clerk will liaise with Streetscene to secure their presence at the March meeting.

Cllr. Lawton-Hughes reported that she had been contacted by Stuart Milne Homes asking whether there were any local groups that could be supported from their Benefits Fund. Since the initial contact and Cllr. Lawton-Hughes' response, there had been no further word from Stuart Milne Homes.

6. ACCOUNTS

(a) Payment of the following accounts were approved:

- (i) Gwen Smith – Clerk's salary for January 2019 = £333.22 (net) (Cheque No. 2104) (Government Act 1972 - Section 111)
- (ii) HM Revenue & Customs – Income Tax payment of £83.20 in respect of Clerk's salary January 2019 (Cheque No. 2105) (Government Act 1972 - Section 111)
- (iii) 2 invoices from Flintshire County Council totalling £8,227.95
 - Invoice TR096391, for £226.35
 - Electricity consumption September 2018, £156.35
 - Inspection and maintenance October 2018, £70.00
 - Invoice TR096426 for £8,001.60
 - Electricity consumption October 2018, £156.35
 - Inspection and maintenance October 2018, £145.25
 - Replacement of lighting column at Duke Street, Sychdyn, £900.00
 - Upgrading of bracketed lights at Church Road, Northop, £6,800.00(Cheque No. 2106) (Highways Act 1957 – Section 17)
- (iv) Cllr. Mrs. Linda Deane – Donations from Chairman's Allowance - £30.00. (Cheques No. 2107 and 2109) (Government Act 1972 - Section 111)

(b) Having received copies of current audited accounts the following grant payment were made under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972:

- (i) Flintshire Citizen's Advice Bureau (£100) (Cheque No. 2108) – As agreed on 9/10/2018.

(c) Cllr. Millar received the updated single mandate form to be presented to the bank to ensure that he is included as a signatory.

7. MATTERS RAISED BY MEMBERS

Flintshire South Area - Police Consultation Meeting (Cllr. J. Carlin)

Members received feedback on the Police Consultation Meeting of 15/11/2018, on the following issues by Cllr. Carlin:

- **Recorded Crime** – A series of statistics indicated an overall increase in reported crime of 6.3% for the South Flintshire area.
- **Policing Priorities** – These were identified with Safer Neighbourhoods included.
- **Staffing** – Budgetary constraints had influenced the reduction in staff numbers. The lack of a custody suite at Mold Police Station has also impacted on staff availability on the beat.
- **Balancing Police and Council Priorities and Common Issues Raised by Councils** – Budgetary constraints are forcing the Police to prioritise their response capabilities and it is therefore more likely that issues such as parking, traffic or speeding offences will go unchallenged. The PCSOs provide a link between community and town council and unfortunately, it is anticipated that PCSO numbers will diminish and undermine this established relationship.
- **Moving Forward** – The drugs problem has become a major drain on Police resources. Suppliers are moving into the area and targeting vulnerable people to work for them as drug dealers.

The Clerk would scan and distribute the handout shared by Cllr. Carlin.

8. TRAFFIC MATTERS

To receive any updates on:

(a) Speeding Vehicles in and around Northop

A response is awaited from Lee Shone on the Traffic Regulation Order to site the GoSafe camera van on the B5126 in the area of the college campus.

(b) Improvement to the road network within the Community Area

(i) Traffic Issues in Northop
A response is still awaited.

(ii) Safety Improvements along New Brighton Road
The Clerk reported that she had recently written to FCC on this matter.

This item will now become a Standing Item on the Council Meeting agenda.

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

No further information was received on the issue which is to be returned to the February Council meeting.

10. COMMUNITY DEFIBRILLATOR

The Chairman congratulated the fundraising group on reaching the required £2,000 and thanked Cllr. Scott for her part in the work. Cllr. Scott advised that FCC's Conservation Officer favours the Post Office as the location for the defibrillator and that she would speak to Mr. Taunton about the exact location. As the Post Office is within the Northop Conservation Area, planning permission would need to be secured to locate the defibrillator cabinet there. Cllr. Scott and the Clerk would work together to complete and submit a planning application. The Council had agreed to support the

annual maintenance costs and these would be included in the budget for coming years.

The matter to be returned to the February agenda.

11. GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT

The three-year grounds maintenance contract came to an end in October 2018. It was agreed that the term of the next grounds maintenance contract would also be 3 years. The three-year arrangement worked well, with minimal administrative work for the Council and a reliable service provided by the contractor. The Clerk to contact local businesses to invite tenders. The letting of the contract to be considered at the February council meeting.

12. SUMMER PLAY SCHEMES 2019

Final costs for the 2019 Summer Playschemes are not yet available but the informal indications are that costs will be only slightly higher than for 2018. Members were therefore not able to confirm a decision.

The matter to be returned to the February meeting.

13. CITIZENS' AWARD

After much discussion it was agreed that the junior award would be renamed "Young Person's Award" and that the criteria for nominations would be as open as possible across the whole of the community area. The Clerk to draft a more appealing poster/guidance and to begin advertising as soon as possible to fit in with the agreed timetable.

14. STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE (ESTIMATED) FOR THE FINANCIAL YEARS ENDING 31st MARCH 2019 AND 31st MARCH 2020

Council considered the report by the Responsible Financial Officer on the estimates for the financial years ending 31st March 2019 and 31st March 2020 in order to agree the precept for the financial year 2019-20. It was noted that additional projects such as road safety initiatives, the Northop Car Park and Environs project, the continued upgrading of the streetlighting portfolio and the need to manage the untenanted Sandhole Field would have an impact on the Council's reserves. However, it was agreed that the budget set was to meet the worst-case scenario and, reflecting on past years, it was agreed that any decision to increase the precept was more sensibly left until January 2020. Council agreed that a planned reserve of 47% of the annual precept was acceptable at this point in time. The Clerk would seek advice from FCC on the remaining number of streetlights to be upgraded and a likely completion date.

Having given due consideration to the matter, it was proposed, seconded and agreed that the precept for Band D equivalent properties should remain at £22.00, for the financial year 2019-2020 and would raise the required £34,320 to meet the agreed budget.

15. WELSH GOVERNMENT SURVEY: USE OF THE WELSH LANGUAGE BY COMMUNITY AND TOWN COUNCILS

Members consider a response to a short survey by the Welsh Government on the Council's use of the Welsh language. The Welsh Government proposes to develop a package of resources for Community and Town Councils to increase their awareness and help increase their use of Welsh. The Clerk to submit the response.

16. WELSH GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION: A494 RIVER DEE BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PREFERRED OPTION

The North and Mid Wales Trunk Road Agent, on behalf of the Welsh Government is currently investigating options to replace the A494 River Dee Bridge. Members considered the response drafted by the Clerk and agreed that if no further comments/observations were received, the Clerk would submit the response before the closing date of 4th February 2019.

17. FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION: REVISED PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN AND POLICIES AND PROCEDURES 2018/2028

Members supported Cllr. Mackey's proposal that the Council's response to the Rights of Way Improvement Plan and Policy Documents should be based on:

- support of the Plan,
- the statistics showing a steady improvement in provision and actions over the past few years,
- priorities of maintenance and responsiveness are hard to fault and it is felt that by and large the current Plan is on target,
- if the aims of the Plan can be delivered, it will be significant benefit,
- there were no adverse comments.

The Clerk to submit the Council's response to the consultation by the closing date of 31st January, 2019

18. LOCAL DEMOCRACY AND BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES CONSULTATION: REVIEW OF THE ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE COUNTY OF FLINTSHIRE

The Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales (LDBCW) are to review the electoral arrangements for the County of Flintshire with a view to considering and formulating proposals for future arrangements. Members considered the response drafted by the Clerk and agreed that if no further comments/observations were received, the Clerk would submit the response before the closing date of 23rd January, 2019.

19. COUNTY FORUM – 14th FEBRUARY 2019 – AGENDA ITEMS

There were no suggestions for agenda items to be considered by FCC.

20. FOR INFORMATION

(a) The Council has received an e-mail of thanks from the Northop Church Committee for the grant of £1,000 to the Parish Churchyard Fund.

(b) Flintshire Play Sufficiency Assessment 2019

Flintshire County Council are seeking the views of Community and Town Councils to assist with their response to the Welsh Government Play Sufficiency Assessment. The assessment aims to provide information to Welsh Government with regard to local issues that impact positively or negatively on children's and young people's opportunities to play in their own communities. Members are asked to give consideration to the content of a response that will be finalised at the next Council meeting, for submission to FCC before the closing date of 22nd February 2019. (Ref. Clerk's e-mail of 04/01/2019)

(c) Future Role of Community and Town Councils

To receive the Welsh Government's update and action plan on the future role of Community and Town Councils. Members are asked to give consideration, over the coming weeks, to the points raised and how this Council can raise visibility, improve engagement and determine what service delivery role the Council could/should play within the Community. Further information can be found at:

<https://gov.wales/topics/localgovernment/communitytowncouncils/review-of-community-town-council-sector/?lang=en>

<https://beta.gov.wales/written-statement-future-role-community-and-town-council-sector-wales>

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

COUNCIL MEETING	DATE: 14th January, 2019
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MEMBER	ITEM	MIN. NO. REFERS
	None.	