

Minutes of General Meeting held on Thursday 12th November 2020

Present: Cllrs

Allan Morgans – Chair
John Almond
Ivy Watts
Amanda Curtis
Paul Sheldon
C Cllr Martyn Holland
Margaret Narburgh – Clerk

Apologies: Cllr

Jac Armstrong – Vice Chair
Isla Watts
Bob Barton
Michael Cordiner

Members of the Public:

Mr Hugo Watts
Mr A King
Mrs G Dillon

122. Cllr Isla Watts

The Chair opened the meeting by wishing Cllr Isla Watts a speedy recovery following her accident. Cllr Ivy Watts reported that she was now recovering at home but it would be a long process.

123. Meeting open to the Public

Mr Hugo Watts complained about the erection of 2 metal soldiers at the War memorial in Llanferres and highlighted 3 issues that were of concern to him. 1. Residents had not been consulted. 2. That it seemed any individual could put whatever they wanted there without permission 3. Focusing on world war 1 was not inclusive and did not show due respect to all the others who had served or fallen in conflict. He proposed the Council should adopt the land and villagers consulted over what should be on that land. Mr Watts comments were noted and considered under item 12 on the agenda.

124. Declarations of Interest

None

125. Approval of Minutes on 1st October 2020

Cllr Morgans proposed they be accepted as an accurate record of the meeting, Cllr Almond seconded and all Councillors present voted in favour.

126. Matters Arising from Meeting on 1st October 2020 ref minute:

104	completed 2.10.20
106/98	completed 15.10.20
109	completed 2.10.20
113	delayed due to Covid-19 restriction
114	all completed 5.11.20
115	both completed 2.10.20
117	completed 11.11.20
118	completed over a number of days in October
119	completed 2.10.20
121	completed early November

127. Correspondence List

The Clerk had circulated correspondence to Councillors as appropriate during the course of the month. 3 items needed considering.

1. The Clerk had received 8 different requests to put forward a representative on Denbighshire CC Public Services Board – no one has volunteered
2. Welsh Government are in the process of changing legislation to make it easier to compulsory purchase land. The Chair proposed the Council should investigate the implication of this further to

protect its' open spaces. An article in the Clerks magazine recommended Councils consider applying to change the status of Council owned land used for playing fields and parks to Village Greens to protect them in perpetuity from building. Cllr Holland reported that he had also read that W.Gov were also planning to change legislation to ensure County Councils were able to adopt many more unadopted roads. He would investigate further because the policy may help roads such as Rectory Lane.

Action: Chair and Clerk to investigate and report at December meeting

3. The publishers of Llanferres News & Views have requested a donation of £600 towards the production costs of the magazine and asked if there would be any objections to using the words New & Views for new publications planned for surrounding villages. After due discussion it was agreed the magazine was of great value to the community and the Council should continue to support it providing it is 'value for money'. There are concerns over the timing of its distribution, the need for such high-quality paper and if the publishers were being too ambitious. It was resolved that the Chair and the Clerk should meet with the creators to obtain a better understanding of their plans and report back at the December meeting.

Action: Chair and Clerk to arrange meeting

128. County Councillor Martin Hollands Monthly Report

Speed Measurements

I have received reports regarding a speed measurement recently undertaken on the Maeshafn/Gwernymynydd road. To date no one has owned up to completing the measurement and DCC Highways and Planning know nothing about it.

I am undertaking further lines of enquiry!!

Verges

I reported that the verges on the Maeshafn/Gwernymynydd road had not been cut only to be told that it was too late to undertake the work this year. I have asked the County to confirm that this and a number of other roads are on the contractors' schedule to make sure they are not missed again.

Speed Limits

I have asked our MS Darren Millar if he could support our request to review the speed limits on the A494 and once again chase the promised flashing speed signs. He has taken up our case and a report has appeared in the local press.

Weed Killing

The second weed killing exercise was undertaken in our villages on the 4th November.

Drainage Works

If you recall I reported that drainage works were needed on a section of the Pont Y Mwynwr Road in Maeshafn. I am pleased to confirm that the County has now undertaken drainage repairs in that area and the winter weather will confirm if the work has been successful.

Cutting Verges

I am pleased to report that the County will be cutting the Bumble Bee verge on the A494 through Llanferres this month, they will increase the visibility splay next year and that they plan to sow the area with further wildflower seeds.

Manhole Covers

The manhole cover has been replaced by the pond in Tafarn Y Gelyn and hopefully residents in the area will now get a good night's sleep. While the work was undertaken it was confirmed that there was an excellent flow of water into the pond.

Dog Fouling

DCC has provided and erected a dog fouling sign for the Park in Maeshafn.

Flooding

I reported the flooding once again near Silverwood House on the Maeshafn/ Gwernymynydd road and I can confirm that work will be undertaken later this month to hopefully solve the problem by installing a concrete apron around the gully which constantly fills up with debris from the neighbouring bank.

Commuted Sum

As already reported there is a further commuted sum available to the Community of Llanferres of £1249 which has been set aside from the Ty Isa development.

Road Closure

Again, as reported there will be a road Closure in Tafarn Y Gelyn on the 8th December for one day only. This involves the Cilcain Road.

Bus Service

Because of the four weeks lock down in England the X1 service bus will not go through to Chester but will terminate in Mold until early December.

Mobile Post Office

I am pleased to confirm that I have been successful in getting a mobile Post Office service for the village of Llanferres. The Post Office have checked the reception in the village and they have confirmed that the vehicle will visit the village on a Thursday and that it will park in the slip road by St Berre's Church. This will be part of the Llandegla, Llanarmon, Eryrys service and the times will be confirmed shortly.

This is great news but whether the service is permanent or not will depend on how well it is used. As always customers will have to respect the distancing rules and wear a face mask. The service is excellent and is well received in the other villages in the ward. I will circulate the times as soon as I have them.

129. Commuted Sum

This has been confirmed at £1249 and the Chair outlined 4 potential projects for which the Council could apply for the funding:

- Replacing the main gate at Maes Ysgawen park with something more suitable for disabled users
- Replacing the noticeboard at Loggerheads Country Park
- Replacing the bench along the main road from Tafarn y Gelyn to Loggerheads
- The development of Maeshafn playing field

It was resolved this would be considered at the December meeting when the precept will be discussed

Action: Clerk to include on December agenda

130. Clocaenog Forest Wind Farm Fund

Is now open for applications based on 80% grant and 20% match funding from applicants. The Chair asked if Councillors wanted to spend the £4000 ring fenced for Maeshafn playing field and £2000 precepted for 'project' work to support a grant application to improve the playing field and orchard area. Preliminary quotes indicate the cost of replacing the play equipment and associated works would be around £20,000 with £4000 funded by the Council and the inclusion of an outdoor education facility £25,000 with a contribution of £5000 from the Council. Cllr Holland offered to e-mail the MS to see if the Aggregates Levy fund was still open. After due discussion Cllr Morgans proposed applying based on £25,000 cost, Cllr Sheldon seconded and all other Councillors voted in favour.

Action: Clerk and Chair to review quotes, consider best 'value for money' and submit grant application

131. Projects Update

Maeshafn playing field & orchard – a substantial amount of equipment has arrived from Keep Wales Tidy to create the Butterfly Garden. An area has been cleared ready for work to start on Monday 16th November. Keep Wales Tidy will provide some labour which will be supported by local volunteers.

Cllr Morgans has removed the sheep protection from around the trees in the orchard area, removed all the debris and tidied up the whole area. He has planted 1000 bluebell bulbs under the main tree and 200 wild daffodils.

Action: Cllrs Morgans and Curtis and the Clerk have volunteered to help

Maes Ysgawen Park – White Oak Properties have removed all the dog roses along the rear boundary and a number of saplings growing amongst them and prepared the land ready for planting. Cllr Morgans and the Clerk have planted 300 wildflower plants, scattered 1 kg of wildflower seeds and 200 wild daffodils. Cllr Morgans and Cllr Sheldon have planted 1000 bluebell bulbs. Phase 1 of the Development Plan is now complete.

132. Maintenance in the Community

1. Pat testing of the Telephone kiosk and Christmas tree lights can now be done.

Action: Cllrs Morgans to arrange

2. After due discussion it was agreed the bench along the main road from Tafarn y Gelyn to Loggerheads should be replaced

Action: cost to be included in 2021-22 precept

3. The land around the war memorial was discussed at length with the Chair acknowledging Mr Watts had raised a 'fair point'. It was agreed the Council should not put itself in a position where it would become liable for the utilities in this area. It was also agreed the first step should be to establish what the current 'rules' are if anyone wants to install signs or other paraphernalia on this land. Cllr Holland cautioned against the Council taking on liability for the cost of maintaining this area and offered to speak to Denbighshire CC

Action: Cllr Holland to speak to his contact within the County Council to clarify what can and cannot be done on their land and the procedure for obtaining permissions needed.

133. Website

The Clerk asked if everyone had been able to active their access to the private area on the website and what information Councillors would like to see there. Cllr Morgans was having difficulty and it was generally agreed that policy documents, financial data and governance information should be published in this area

Action: Clerk to re-send access codes to Cllr Morgans

134. Policy Documents

Cllrs Armstrong and Cordiner had commented on the Habitual or Vexatious complaints policy and the Clerk has amended. The document refers to the Councils Complaints Procedure which the Council does not currently have in place. Cllr Morgans proposed adopting the amended policy document and drafting a complaints procedure ready for discussion at the next meeting. Cllr Curtis seconded and all other Councillors voted in favour.

Action: Clerk to publish the document in the private area of the website and draft a Complaints policy

The language policy was read out and accepted subject to the removal of reference to 'residents from the community'. Cllr Morgans proposed the Language document be adopted, Cllr Sheldon seconded and all Councillors voted in favour.

Action: Clerk to amend and publish

All Councillors had read and accepted the Sickness Policy. Cllr Morgans proposed it be accepted, Cllr Almond seconded and all other Councillors voted in favour.

Action: Clerk to publish the document and include the remaining policy documents on the Agenda for December meeting

135. Banking

Cllr Ivy Watts had checked the October bank statements against the payments authorised at last months meeting and all Internet Banking transactions and reported all was in order.

The Clerk reported that due to Covid-19 restrictions suppliers were not accepting cheques and she had used her own funds to pay for the poppy wreaths and memorial bench. Cllr Morgans had also used his own funds to buy bulbs, seeds and fixings for the bench online as the only accepted method of payment was by debit or credit card. Both have re-claimed the costs incurred. However, both are aware this is not permitted under the Financial Regulations and the Clerk will include a note to the Auditors to explain why the breach happened when the time comes. She also suggested that it might be time for the Council to apply for a debit card to prevent this happening again given the whole banking and payment system is moving away from cheques and towards card payments. Cllr Morgans proposed allowing the Clerk to apply for a debit card with a maximum spending limit of £500 per transaction. Cllr Curtis seconded and all other Councillors voted in favour.

Action: Clerk to make arrangements with Bank

136. Schedule of Bills for Payment

The following bills had been received during the month and presented for authorisation to pay

1. AVOW - payment of Clerk salary, backpay and admin fee for October	£315.90
2. Allan Morgans – Flora Bulbs wild daffodils	£115.80
3. Lawn Order - Autumn treatment	£35.00
4. Margaret Narburgh – memorial bench	£221.49
5. Allan Morgans – petrol for lawn mower	£24.71
6. Allan Morgans - GoTo meeting fee October	£13.20
7. Allan Morgans – Emorsgate wildflower seeds Maes Ysgawen	£45.76
8. Allan Morgans – Fixings for replacement bench	£15.53
9. White Oak Properties – Phase 1 of Maes Ysgawen development	£1140.00
10. White Oak Properties – General maintenance in the community	£240.00
Total	£2167.39

Cllr Morgans proposed all bills be paid, Cllr Almond seconded and all Councillors voted in favour.

Action: Clerk to pay all bills on schedule

137. Precept 2021-22

Cllr Morgans asked that everyone consider what items should be included in the precept for next year and if they wished to claim the Councillors Payment ready for discussion at the December meeting

138. Other Matters Brought to the Councils Attention

None

The Chair thanks everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.26 p.m.

**The next General Meeting of the Council will be held on Thursday 10th December 2020
starting at 7.30 pm by Video Conference**