

Minutes of General Meeting held on Thursday 14th January 2021

Present: Cllrs

Allan Morgans – Chair
Jac Armstrong – Vice Chair
Isla Watts
Michael Cordiner
John Almond
Ivy Watts
Amanda Curtis
Paul Sheldon
Jac Armstrong
C Cllr Martyn Holland
Margaret Narburgh – Clerk

Apologies:

None

Members of the Public:

Mr G Davidson
Mrs G Dillon
Mr A King

160. Meeting open to the Public

Nothing raised.

161. Declarations of Interest

None declared

162. Approval of Minutes on 10th December 2020

Cllr Almond proposed they be accepted as an accurate record of the meeting, Cllr Armstrong seconded and all Councillors voted in favour that the minutes be accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

163. Matters Arising from Meeting on 10th December 2020 ref minute:

| | |
|-------|---|
| 147 | completed 14.12.20 |
| 148 | completed 13.12.20 |
| 150 | completed 13.12.20 |
| 152 | completed 13.12.20 |
| 153 | completed 16.12.12 and on agenda for this meeting |
| 154 | completed during course of the month |
| 155 | still outstanding, to be completed 15.1.2021 |
| 157 | completed 11.12.20 |
| 159/1 | completed 13.12.20 although cheque still not cashed |
| 159/4 | completed 13.12.20 |

Cllr Almond reported that he had agreed to be the contact point if the mobile post office van could not visit Llanferres on Thursday afternoons. They would ring him so he could let people know.

Actions: C Cllr Holland to ask the Post Office if they had a sign that could be put out when the van was not visiting.

Cllr Almond to let the Cllr Morgans know if they weren't visiting so he could post notice on Facebook

It was noted that the 2 metal soldiers that should have been taken down at the end of November had still not been removed.

164. Correspondence List

The Clerk had circulated correspondence to Councillors as appropriate during the course of the month. Two items needed considering and all are on agenda for this meeting. Other items needing consideration were:

1. Cllr Morgans reported he was reading the Draft National Plan for Wales and would report back at the next meeting if there was anything the Council might want to comment on.

2. Tafarn y Gelyn Pond project team have asked if the Council could contribute towards maintenance and improvement work planned for later this year. After due discussion Cllr Morgans proposed a grant of £250, Cllr Curtis seconded and all other Councillors voted in favour.
Action: Clerk to respond and send cheque
3. Councillors discussed the positioning of the flashing speed warning signs due to be put up along the A494 near Loggerheads and agreed they could be better positioned in both directions.
Action Clerk to respond to North Wales Trunk Road Agency with photograph indicating preferred position of signage

165. Glocaenog Forest Wind Farm Fund – Grant for Maeshafn Playing Field & Orchard

The Chair thanked the Clerk for all her effort in submitting the grant application for improvements to Maeshafn Playing Field and Orchard. The grant was approved and the £18476 has arrived in the bank. The Clerk went through the quotes received from the 4 contractors who had been asked to tender for the work and after due discussion the Chair proposed appointing PlayQuest to provide the play equipment and Celtic Stone to do the groundworks. Cllr Sheldon seconded and all other Councillors voted in favour. PlayQuest terms and condition require a £5000 deposit to be paid on appointment. After due discussion Cllr Sheldon proposed paying this ASAP, Cllr Curtis seconded and Cllrs Almond, Armstrong, Isla Watts, Ivy Watts and Morgans voted in favour. Cllr Cordiner was having technical difficulties and couldn't hear so did not vote.
Action: Clerk to formally appoint contractors and pay deposit to PlayQuest
Action: Chair and Clerk to liaise with contractors and oversee the work

166. 3rd Quarter Review of Accounts

The Clerk reported income up to end of December 2020 at £17017 and expenditure at £15051. Forecast to the end of March is income of £17017 and expenditure of £17560 giving an overspend of £543. The overspend is due to expenditure on the new website which was not precepted for and improvements to Maes Ysgawen park paid for out of reserves with an offset against additional income from the commuted sum, VAT reclaim and savings from other expenditure precepted for. At the end of March reserves are forecast to be £13391 with £8819 being ringfenced for 3 items (Election, Maeshafn playing field and Councillor payments) giving available reserves of £4572 equivalent to 30% of precept.

167. 2021-22 Precept

The Chair went through the proposed expenditure during 2021-22 line by line and after due discussion the Chair proposed a precept of £15150, Cllr Almond seconded and all other Councillors voted in favour.
Action: Clerk to revise calculation sheet, circulate to all and return Precept Form to Denbighshire CC

During the precept discussion the following items were noted for action:

1. **Clerk can now submit application for commuted sum to replace the noticeboard at Loggerheads**
2. **Chair to contact Keith Gould to quote for fixing Millennium Fountain**
3. **Cllr Holland to contact Trunk Road Agency to ask if a work permit is needed to replace the bench between Tafarn y Gelyn and Loggerheads**
4. **C Cllr Holland to submit request to Denbighshire Highways for either a dropped kerb outside Maes Ysgawen park or a hard surface pavement between Llanferres playing field entrance and the park to facilitate easy access for those with mobility scooters, wheelchairs and pushchairs**
5. **Review payment of grant to News & Views in September based on information provided by them at the time.**

168. County Councillor Martin Hollands Monthly Report

Tree Felling Moel Famau

NRW has reported that they will be felling a large number of Larch trees in the forest at Moel Famau because they are sadly diseased. This will involve traffic lights between the two car parks and some footpaths may have to be temporarily closed for H&S reasons.

Maeshafn Bus Turning

I have reported that the bus is once again struggling to turn around in the village centre in Maeshafn. The County will investigate to see how we can resolve this problem which may involve restricting parking in that area. Can I please ask people not to park in such a way as to prevent the buses turning because we do not want to lose the service.

S Bend at Aberduna

I have once again asked the County to revisit placing Chevrons on the bends by the old Aberduna Quarry. The police very kindly provided details of five accidents at this spot over the last four years which I have passed on to the Highways Team.

COVID-19 Restrictions

Because of the COVID-19 Crisis and the problems with the number of people breaking the COVID-19 regulations I have asked the County to consider closing two key lay-bys in the ward. This request includes the Plymog lay-by which was used during the recent snow falls for access to local fields for sledging.

Sledging at Cadole

As you all know DCC and the Police had placed No Trespassing signs around the field in Cadole that has been used illegally for sledging for some years. We thought that these signs had worked when snow fell in the area over New Year because no one accessed the field. Sadly, by midday last Saturday the first sledges were reported once again in the field. We had additional concerns because there were sheep in the field which may have been carrying lambs at this time of year and any human activity and dogs may have caused the sheep to abort. Any broken fences could have also let sheep out onto the A494. Because of this activity the police were called and they did ask all those involved to leave the area.

New Year's Eve at Moel Famau

I spoke to the Police and Countryside Services just before New Year because I had serious concerns about the potential influx of visitors to Moel Famau on New Year's Eve. Traditionally many people walk up Moel Famau to see the New Year in and under normal circumstances they are welcome to do so. Sadly, we are not in normal times and with pubs closed and parties cancelled because of the COVID-19 restrictions I was concerned that people would break the COVID-19 regulations and that we would have even larger crowds this year. This could have been a huge COVID-19 spreader event!!

The Police and Countryside services agreed to provide support to send these people home.

Snow Fall

We have had two major snow falls over the last two weeks and despite COVID-19 stay at home regulations the area became a magnet for sledgers and walkers so much so that the Forestry Road was gridlocked on New Year's Eve.

The previously agreed plan was then put into action and the police provided two cars and officers in Tafarn Y Gelyn and Llanbedr to stop people entering the area and to send them home. The police were deployed until 3.00am New Year's Day.

Rangers were also deployed to ask people who had already arrived to again leave the area and go home. One driver from Ellesmere Port skidded off the road the other side of the Penbarras Car Park and the emergency services had to be called out to recovery him and his vehicle.

The problems at Moel Famau made the BBC and Sky News.

Local Government Reorganisation

Once again the Welsh Government are proposing to reorganise Local Government and they are still wanting to create Regional tiers. These will be called CJsCs Corporate Joint Committees with far more unelected/appointed

members. This is again a threat to local Government and local democracy and DCC will be opposing these proposals.

Car Park Closures

All Car Parks in our Country Parks are now closed in support of the COVID-19 regulations. Locals can still walk to them and in them. People should not drive to take exercise!! Sadly, because the car parks are closed the Loggerheads garage has reported visitors from out of the area parking on their garage forecourt and then heading for the park!! This I have reported to the police.

Flashing Speed Limit Signs at Loggerheads

Great News about the long overdue flashing speed limit signs for Loggerheads. It has only taken two years from the Ministers original promise but hopefully it will help to stop speeding through that busy area and improve safety for visitors, businesses and residents alike.

AONB Sustainable Development Fund

I am pleased to report that the AONB Sustainable Development Fund has been doubled to £100k for 2021. If you are a local organisation based within the AONB and are looking for a contribution towards a project now is the time to check the AONB website for details and application forms.

County Councillor Kevin Hughes

I have already reported the sad news about the death Kevin Hughes from COVID-19 complications. Kevin was the Flintshire County Councillor for Gwernymynydd and he and I had worked together on a number of issues that effected both Cadole and Maeshafn.

It was Kevin who kindly got Flintshire to resurface their section of the road past the Youth Hostel. I have written to his widow and his family expressing my deepest sympathy.

Salt Bins

Cllr Cordiner reported that salt had not been provided at Taryn y Gelyn.

Action: C Cllr Holland to bring this up again during his meeting with Highways along with the positioning of new salt bins.

169. Projects Update

Green Flag Award

Cllr Armstrong and the Clerk have worked together in submitted the application form for Maes Ysgawen and Maeshafn Playing Field and Orchard.

170. Maintenance in the Community

1. Cllr Morgans is waiting for date from electric contractor for Pat testing of the Telephone kiosk and feed to Christmas tree lights.

Action: Cllr Morgans to chase the contractor

2. Memorial area at Llanferres was discussed at length. Cllr Sheldon reported that there were 2 owners of the strip of land – Denbighshire CC and an unknow. Cllr Armstrong felt that with Denbighshire having maintained it for over 20 years it would automatically be classed as owned by them. Cllr Almond reported that he tidied up the area around the memorial twice a year and other local residents kept the verge tidy as and when. Councillors agreed there were no benefits in owning the land and that maintenance arrangements should be left as they are.

Action: Cllr Morgans to contact Highways Dept

171. Banking

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

The Clerk reported she had now received a debit card for the current account.

Action: Chair to arrange for GoTo Meetings fee to be paid through debit card rather than his own account

172. 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 - GoTo meeting fee November | £13.20 |
| 3. Audit Wales – External Audit fee | £302.00 |
| 4. PlayQuest - deposit for Maeshafn playing field | £5000.00 |
| 5. Tafarn y Gelyn Pond – grant for project work | £250.00 |
| Total | £5881.10 |

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

Action: Clerk to pay all bills on schedule

173. Review of Policy Documents

1. Grievance Policy – Cllr Sheldon proposed it be accepted, Cllr Curtis seconded and all other Councillors voted in favour
2. Disciplinary Policy – Cllr Curtis proposed it be accepted, Cllr Sheldon seconded and all other Councillors voted in favour
3. Concerns and Complaints Policy – Chair proposed it be accepted, Cllr Curtis seconded and all Councillors voted in favour.

Action: Clerk to formally adopt and publish policy documents

174. Councillor Vacancy

The returning officer has notified the Clerk that an election had not been called for and so she had posted Co-option notices on 3rd January 2021 with a closing date of 31st January 2021.

The Chair thanked Mr Graham Davidson for expressing his interest in becoming a Councillor, his CV and for attending this meeting. He also explained that the Council now had to wait until the end of January to see if any other applicants come forward. There would then follow a selection process at the February meeting.

Action: Clerk to notify Councillors at the end of January if other applications are received for Councillors to agree how they wish to proceed

175. Other Matters Brought to the Councils Attention

1. The Clerk stated that no issues had been found during the first quarterly Accessibility scan of the website
2. Cllr Cordiner had been asked by a resident if the Council could place a bench on the verge of the turning circle on the old length of the A494 (now a public bridleway) opposite the entrance to Bryn Bowlio Farm, Tafarn y Gelyn
Action: Chair to visit the site and obtain quote for consideration
3. Cllr Morgans has received complaints about damage to the triangle in Maeshafn by contractors. He had spoken to them and asked them to make good the damage when they finish.
4. Cllr Morgans has been in communication with C Cllr Holland re flooding at the bottom of Maeshafn Road and provided photographs to demonstrate that the proposed work by Denbighshire CC would not solve the issue.

Action: C Cllr Holland to progress with Highways dept

The Chair thanks everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.36 p.m.

**The next General Meeting of the Council will be held on Thursday 11th February 2021
starting at 7.30 pm by Video Conference**