

Minutes of General Meeting held on Thursday 8th April 2021

Present: Cllrs

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

Apologies:

None

Members of the Public:

Hugo Watts
Tony King
Julie Lawton
Lorraine Mathews
Rachel Gibson

208. Apologies

None. Cllr Armstrong stated he may need to leave the meeting for a short while to take a phone call. Cllr Cordiner stated he may need to leave the meeting early for lambing.

The Chair opened the meeting and stated that in future, requests for invitations to attend Council meetings must be received by the Clerk before 12 noon on the day of the meeting. The Chair stated that in accordance with Standing Order 3 (L) recording of Council meeting is not permitted.

209. Meeting Open to the Public

The Chair opened the meeting to the general public for 10 minutes. Nothing was raised.

210. Declarations of Interest

Cllrs Ivy and Isla Watts declared in an interest in item 15c on the Agenda

Action: Clerk to forward both Declaration of Interest form to sign

211. Approval of Minutes on 11th March 2021

Cllr Holland stated Hannah Parish's title should read Aggregates Officer, Flintshire and Denbighshire CC. The Chair highlighted 3 typographical errors.

Cllr Cordiner proposed the minutes be accepted subject to the above corrections being made, Cllr Curtis seconded and all Councillors voted in favour of accepting the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

212. Matters Arising from Meeting on 11th March 2021 ref minute:

167/4	Still waiting for answer from DCC re dropping kerb at entrance to Maes Ysgawen park
192/1	Potholes in Rectory Lane – waiting answer from DCC
192/2	Dog fouling – on agenda
193	Completed by Cllr Holland
200	Completed 13.3.21
203	Bench adjacent to Bryn Bouloeg Farm – on agenda
204/1	PAT testing – on agenda
204/2	Bench on A494 – on agenda
204/3	Maintenance around war memorial – on agenda
204/4	Millennium fountain – on agenda
204/5	Dog fouling bin – on agenda
206	Completed 13.3.21

213. Correspondence List

The Clerk had circulated correspondence to Councillors as appropriate during the course of the month. The Clerk was asked to go through the item from the Clerks Society regarding future Election changes. She stated she had attended a meeting on 17th March where forthcoming changes to Legislation as it affected the Clerks duties were explained as follows:

1. Remote meetings can continue after May 2021 for as long as needed but Clerks are being encouraged to return to face to face meeting as soon as they are allowed when Covid restrictions are lifted
2. From May 2022, draft minutes of all Council meetings must be published on the website within 7 days of meetings taking place
3. From 5th May 2022, Councillors must have 'reasonable opportunity' to discuss anything on the agenda. This means the 3 minute rule is likely to change but no details available yet
4. From April 2022, Councils will be required to publish an Annual Report for the year just ended i.e., 2021/22
5. From April 2022, Councils must have a training plan in place for the Clerk and Councillors and have precepted for it. This means training will need to be planned for the year ahead in November for the cost to be included in the precept
6. From May 2022 the General Power of Competence encourages more public participation – no details of how this might work in practice
7. In Wales, 16 and 17 year olds will be eligible to register to vote in elections
8. The minimum age to become a Councillor remains the same at 18
9. From 2022, the term of office will be 5 years
10. Candidates from any country can stand for election
11. Council staff can stand for election on their own council but must resign from any paid work for that council. At the moment an employee can also be a Councillor providing they are not paid for their employment
12. Councillors can be disqualified if convicted under the Sexual Offences Act

Cllr Almond stated there was a discrepancy in the finance section between the fee for GoTo Meetings on the Correspondence List and Schedule of Bills for payment. The Clerk stated this was a typographical error and the amount should be £13.20.

Action: Clerk to correct mistake on Correspondence List

214. Internal Audit

The Clerk stated she had received notification from the Welsh Audit Office that plans to introduce full transaction audits have been postponed until 2022 because a number 2019/20 audits are not yet complete due to delays with Covid restrictions.

The time line for completion of 2020/21 Internal Audits remains the same and the Council is required to have its internal audit complete before 30th June 2021.

The Clerk asked if anyone wanted to ring fence anything in the reserves so that she could finalise the accounts and prepare the Annual Return. Councillors agreed the following sums be ringfenced:

- Election expenses £2000
- Councillor payments £2350
- Maeshafn playing field £650
- Tafarn y Gelyn bench £500

Action: Clerk to note in Accounts

215. Commuted Sum

The Clerk had applied for the Commuted Sum in March to part fund the path in Maeshafn playing field. This was granted and £1249 was paid into the bank on 6th April 2021

216. Election Changes

Nothing to add to information provided by Clerk under item 213

217. Public Spaces Protection Order

After due discussion Councillors decided to respond individually to the proposals from DCC re dog fouling

218. Planning Application 21/2021/0230 The Paddock, Tafarn y Gelyn

After due discussion Cllr Armstrong proposed the Clerk respond by stating the Council had no objection to the application subject to compliance with the technical requirement stated by DCC and paragraph 4.3 in Tan 6. And that recommendations made by AONB officer also be taken into account. Cllr Almond seconded and all Cllrs voted in favour

Action: Clerk to respond to DCC

219. County Councillor Martin Hollands Monthly Report

New Defibrillator

A new standalone defibrillator has now been installed between the Penbarras Car Park and the top of Moel Famau. Hopefully, it will help to save lives on what is a relatively remote but popular walk in the Clwydian Range.

Fire Service Training

Countryside Services and the Fire Service have held a number of wildfire training sessions on Moel Famau last month. The first had to be postponed due to rain!!

Mobile Phone Mast

A new EE mast has been erected on Ffordd Maeshafn and it should go live this Autumn. This will help to improve mobile phone reception in the area

Burley Hill Quarry

The revived Burley Hill Quarry Liaison committee will be holding its first meeting at the end of April. Because of the number of Councils and attendees now involved they have asked if we can reduce the representation from the Llanferres Community Council to two members. Llanarmon will now only have one member but there will now be a representative from Nercwys Community Council, Flintshire County Council and there will also be two residents reps from Maeshafn and one rep from MADRA.

Maeshafn Playing Field

After the upgrade of the Maeshafn Play Ground I have asked the County to consider installing playground warning signs as you approach the field. This is normal practice especially in rural areas where there are no formal speed limits.

Planning Enforcement

The County Council have confirmed their intention to employ another planning enforcement officer in this new financial year and the County intend to take a harder line against planning breaches. If you have any doubt about plans you have to improve your property, creating new access to your land or any development in the open countryside you should speak to the DCC planning department for advice before you proceed.

220. Projects Update

a. Maeshafn Playing Field re-opened on 26th March. One of the legs of the activity frame is moving slightly and a temporary fix is in place. It is safe to use and the Contractors have agreed to return after the Easter Holidays to complete the repair. Expenditure at the end of March was £25,893.01 including VAT and the budget is £26,655, giving an underspend of £761.99. The Clerk stated she would be re-claiming £3560 VAT so the net underspend would be £652.49. £650 of this is being ring fenced in the accounts to fund repairs to gaps in the hedge, re-seeding parts of the park and the purchase of 2 spring closers for the gates.

Action: Clerk and Chair to arrange for outstanding works to be completed ASAP

b. The Chair and Cllr Cordiner had not had time to meet to progress this.

Action: Chair and Cllr Cordiner to survey the site and report back at meeting in May

221. Maintenance in the Community

a. PAT testing of the telephone kiosk and Christmas tree lights is still outstanding. Contractor has been chased again

b. Highways have confirmed the bench on A494 can be replaced with one of similar size but an attempt will be made to repair it first

Action: Cllr Morgans to progress with carpenter when weather improves

c. Highways have confirmed they are happy for the Council to include cutting the grass and hedge to their maintenance programme. LCC will not be responsible for any other works in this area. Cllr Almond proposed asking White Oak Properties to quote, Cllr Cordiner seconded. Cllrs Sheldon, Davidson, Morgans and Curtis voted in favour. Cllrs Ivy and Isla Watts abstained and Cllr Armstrong was not present for the vote. The motion was carried.

Action: Clerk to invite White Oak Properties to quote

d. Repairing the Millennium water fountain is a fiddly job and it may have to be kept switched off until Covid restrictions are lifted.

Action: Cllr Holland to confirm if this is the case with DCC before Council decides to go ahead

e. Dog foul waste bins are currently located next to the bus shelter in Tafarn y Gelyn, Maeshafn village and outside Maes Ysgawen park. Cllr Almond felt a fourth was needed in the layby on the A494 near Plymog as visitors were hanging waste on the hedge.

Action: Cllr Holland to contact DCC and suggest the Council pay for a bin if they will empty it

222. Banking

The Clerk had sent Cllr Ivy Watts March bank statements and accounts for her to check against internet banking transactions the day before the meeting. Cllr Watts had not had time to check them.

Action: Cllr Ivy Watts to check and contact the Clerk and confirm if all is correct

223. Schedule of Bills for Payment

The following bills were presented for authorisation to pay

1. AVOW - payment of Clerks salary, backpay and admin fee for February	£315.90
2. M Narburgh – Clerks expenses from Dec to March	£91.99
3. Debit card payment of GoTo meeting fee for March	£13.20
4. Net World Sports – football nets Maeshafn park	£74.92
5. One Voice Wales – annual membership fee	£120.00
6. Lawn Order – spring treatment Maeshafn village green	£40.00
7. B&Q – refund for paint	-£20.00

8. Woodworks – picnic bench and tree stakes Maeshafn park	£235.39
9. Eastwick Plants – shrubs for Maeshafn park	£45.00
10. B&Q – 2 x padlocks Maeshafn park	£26.00
11. Wells Timber Products – Picnic table Maeshafn park	£145.00
12. Celtic Stone - path in Maeshafn park	£3650.00
13. PlayQuest – balance of payment for work in Maeshafn park	£14979.70
Total	£19,717.10

The Chair asked the Clerk where this left the Council’s financial reserves. She did not have exact figures and stated after these bill had been paid, approx. £5000 reclaimed from HMRC for VAT and income from the Commuted sum, reserves would be around £12,000 and in line with the auditors recommended levels. Cllr Armstrong proposed all bills be paid, Cllr Davidson seconded, and all Councillors voted in favour.

Action: Clerk to pay all bills on schedule

224. Other Matters Brought to the Councils Attention

None

The Chair thanked everyone for attending, Cllr Curtis proposed closing the meeting, Cllr Cordiner seconded, and the meeting was closed at 20.51 p.m.

Cllr Almond noticed members of the public then wanted to speak and informed the Chair. The Chair stated they had been invited to speak at the start of the meeting but hadn’t, and the meeting was now closed.

**The Annual General Meeting of the Council will be held on Thursday 13th May 2021
starting at 7.30 pm by Video Conference**