

Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on Thursday 13th May 2021

Present: Cllrs

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

Apologies:

Graeme Davidson

Members of the Public:

Gwyneth Dillon
Hugo Watts
Tony King – part time
Julie Lawton – part time
Lorraine Mathews – part time
Rachel Gibson – part time

225. Apologies

Cllr Davidson sent his apologies due to work and family commitments

226. Election of Chair

Cllr Almond proposed Cllr Morgans continue as Chair, Cllr Cordiner seconded and all Cllrs present voted in favour. Cllr Morgans accepted and agreed to sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Action: Clerk to witness Cllr Morgans signing the Declaration of Acceptance of Office form

227. Election of Vice Chair

Cllr Morgans proposed Cllr Armstrong continue as Vice Chair, Cllr Almond seconded and all Cllrs present voted in favour. Cllr Armstrong accepted.

Action: Clerk to send Cllr Armstrong electronic copy of Declaration of Acceptance of Office form for signing

228. Appointment of Representatives to Sub-committees

All Cllrs present agreed to the following representatives on sub-committees

- One Voice Wales – Cllr Morgans and the Clerk
- Llanferres Village Hall Management – Cllr Armstrong
- Old People's Welfare – Cllr Ivy Watts
- Llanferres Playing Field and Recreation Association – Cllr Isla Watts
- Community Open Spaces, Maeshafn playing field and Maes Ysgawen – full council
- Clwyd branch of Society of Clerks – Margaret Narburgh
- Planning sub-committee – full council
- News & Views reporter – the Clerk
- Website management – Clerk and Cllr Curtis

It was agreed the Big Covert sub-committee would be disbanded as it had not met since being formed and activity in Big Covert has settled down.

Action: Clerk to update records, website and circulate to Councillors

229. Dates of Meeting 2021-22

The Clerk had circulated dates of meeting up until March 2022 prior to this meeting which Councillors accepted.

230. Review of Governance Documents

The Chair stated that notification of changes to Legislation received on 13th May 2021 meant the Council may need to amend its Standing Orders.

Action: Clerk to put on Agenda for June meeting

The Code of Conduct, Financial Regulations, Habitual and Vexatious Complaints, Concerns and Complaints, Co-optation of Councillors, Data Protection, Delegation, Disciplinary, Equal Opportunities, Expenses, Grievance and Health & Safety documents had either been created or reviewed during the previous year. The Chair proposed these be accepted for the coming year, Cllr Cordiner seconded and all Councillors present voted in favour.

231. Meeting Open to the Public

The Chair opened the meeting to the general public.

Mrs Matthews asked if the Council was aware of intimidating and bullying behaviour towards her family and other residents by the Councils Contractors, the leaking of confidential information by the Chair and Clerk, the anonymous letter sent to another resident and asked that it be noted in the minutes that she had not made a complaint to the Council about dogs in the park. She proceeded to go into detail naming the Councils Contractors and the Clerk. After due course, the Chair interrupted to ask if she had a question to ask as she was making a statement and repeating what was in her letters to the Council. She stated no one bullies or intimates her.

Prof Gibson stated the response she had received from the Council following her formal complaint on 6th and 8th April failed to address her complaint and asked if the response was from all Councillors. Cllr Armstrong stated that it had been seen and approved by all Councillors before it was sent.

Ms Lawton applauded the work done by the Council in Maeshafn playing field and made an appeal for the Council to review its decision in relation to the ball catcher as she felt the Council had failed to provide any opportunity for residents to review where pieces of equipment would be sited. She stated more than 6 households felt the ball catcher was not suitable for the less able bodied and the one resident in the village who had a disabled child had not been approached for their view. The Chair stated that her request was included in the letter she sent to the Council and would be answered when the Correspondence list was discussed later in the meeting.

232. Declarations of Interest

Cllrs Ivy and Isla Watts declared in an interest in item 17c on the Agenda

Action: Clerk to record as a continuation of declaration signed by them in April for this item

233. Approval of Minutes on 8th April 2021

Cllr Almond asked for clarification of point 10 under minute 213. Cllr Holland stated that anyone eligible to live in UK who is not a British Citizen but has taken up residency and has the right to stay in the UK will in future be eligible to take part in elections in Wales.

Cllr Cordiner proposed the minutes be accepted subject to 3 typographical errors being corrected, Cllr Almond seconded and all Councillors present, voted in favour of accepting the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

234. 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 – still waiting answer from DCC
204/4	Millennium fountain – C Cllr Holland confirmed all water fountains in Denbighshire had been switched off due to Covid restrictions
213	Completed 9 th April
214	Completed 9 th April
218	Completed 9 th April
220a	Some of work completed but Chair is having difficulty fixing the spring closer on the gate between the playing field and orchard area in Maeshafn
220b	Completed and on agenda for further discussion
221b	Bench has been repaired by David Clough
221c	Quote received and on agenda for discussion
221d & e	On agenda for discussion
222	Cllr Ivy Watts confirmed she had checked the April bank statements and all was correct
218	Completed 9 th April
223	Completed 9 th April

235. Year End Accounts, Annual Return and Internal Audit

The Clerk had circulated the 2020-21 year end accounts prior to the meeting and stated income had been £35,493.66 and expenditure £43,002.08 so expenditure had exceeded income by £7508.42. This was due to the cost of the website design, the Councils contribution to the development of Maeshafn playing field and additional grants being given to local organisations due to loss of income due to Covid restrictions which had been funded out of reserves. Reserves at the end of March were £6445.67. Cllr Cordiner proposed the accounts be accepted, Cllr Almond seconded and all Cllrs present voted in favour.

The Clerk had circulated the completed draft Annual Return prior to the meeting for consideration by Cllrs. The Clerk read out the Annual Governance Statement and Councillors agreed with statements 1 to 9. Cllr Shelton proposed this be approved, Cllr Curtis seconded and all Cllrs present voted in favour.

The Clerk stated all the documentation was required to be delivered to the Internal Auditor on 20th May and she would do this.

236. Insurance

The Clerk had obtained comparative quotes for the insurance renewal. BHIB, the existing insurer had quoted an annual premium of £746.20 and £653.40 for a 3 year contract. Keegan & Pennykid had quoted £759.89 for one year and Came & Co £915.40. All quotes were based on the increase value of Assets following the refurbishment of Maeshafn playing field. The Chair felt the Council should continue with the existing provider based on a one year contract so not to encumber the Council to be elected in 2022 with contracts they had not been involved in. Cllr Almond proposed renewing the insurance with BHIB for one year. Cllr Curtis seconded and all Cllrs present voted in favour.

Action: Clerk to renew insurance as proposed

237. Correspondence List

The Clerk had circulated correspondence to Councillors as appropriate during the course of the month.

- The Chair addressed the letters and attachments received from Mr & Mrs Matthews dated 1st April and 5th May where they had requested the Council review its resolution regarding Maeshafn playing field, ref minute 196 that 'work should continue as planned and in the event of issues being raised the matter would be reconsidered'. These items had been circulated to Councillors 10 days prior to this meeting. Standing Order 7(a) states '*A resolution shall not be reversed within six months except either*

by a special motion, which requires written notice by at least (3) councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the recommendation of a committee or a sub-committee’.

No such motions had been received by the Clerk and therefore the decision could not be reviewed until October 2021.

With regard to the second request that reference to aggression be removed from minute 196, the Chair stated that minutes are a record of what is actually said during a meeting and do not imply anything. The minutes have been accepted by Councillors as a true and accurate record and cannot now be altered. The Chair stated that only he knows what he experienced on his doorstep and it was one very angry, animated individual who in his opinion, was aggressive. The individual concerned obviously felt an apology was necessary for his behaviour but rather than telephone or e-mail the Chair directly, he had asked a neighbour to convey the apology on his behalf. As far as the Chair is concerned this matter is now closed.

In relation to the e-mail forwarded to the Council from Tony Hughes from Denbighshire CC, the Council is unaware of what brief Mr Hughes was given or why DCC chose to inspect Maeshafn playing field which they do not own or manage, without first informing the Clerk as a matter of common courtesy. So cannot comment on its content.

In relation to the e-mail forwarded to the Council from Andrew Steel regarding the colour of the ball catcher, there are other playing fields within the AONB and rural Denbighshire which are much more colourful than the ball catcher.

The information asked for in the Freedom of Information request received on 17th April has been prepared by the Clerk and seen by all Councillors. It was agreed the Clerk could now release the documents.

Action: Clerk to send formal letter and information requested to Mr & Mrs Matthews

- The information asked for by Prof Gibson in the Freedom of Information request received on 22nd April has been prepared by the Clerk and seen by all Councillors. It was agreed the Clerk could now release the documents.

Action: Clerk to send information to Prof Gibson

- The Council responded to the formal complaint received from Prof Gibson on 6th May. The Chair acknowledged what the complainant had said earlier and asked Cllr Armstrong if he wished to add anything, which he didn't.
- The request from Ms Lawton to review its resolution in minute 196 had been circulated to Councillors and no motions had been received by the Clerk, therefore the decision can not be reviewed until October 2021

Action: Clerk to respond to Ms Lawton

- A request from LPFRA for a grant to pay their insurance premium had been received. Cllr Armstrong proposed paying the £138.32, Cllr Morgans seconded and all Councillors present voted in favour.

Action: Clerk to pay

- The Clerk has received numerous requests from National Charities for a donation. Cllr Almond stated that it has always been the Councils policy to support those charities that benefited the local community. The Council resolved that this policy should continue.
- St Berries Church has asked for financial assistance for the maintenance of the churchyard. Cllr Almond proposed a grant of £500 whilst Covid is still affecting their income, Cllr Sheldon seconded and all Cllrs present voted in favour.

Action: Clerk to pay

238. County Councillor Martin Hollands Monthly Report

Parking on Forestry Road

I will be meeting with Officers from Countryside Services on Wednesday morning the 12th May to review the planned changes to parking and parking restrictions on Forestry Road. We need to consider the local residents requirements as well as trying to control the number of visitors.

Speeding Signs A494

As you know I have met with Welsh Government Civil Servants and Darren Millar in the past about the speed of traffic on the A494, signage, etc. We asked for flashing speed limit signs in Loggerheads and recently we have asked for similar signs on the stretch of the A494 through Llanferres. We asked for better visibility at the two Llanarmon junctions and double white lines through the bends to the Clwyd Gate.

Last year we were told that no further changes would take place until a full review of the speed limits on all Welsh Trunk Roads were undertaken. I understand this has now happened and the WG website indicates that there will be changes on three stretches of the A494 through our ward and these include Loggerheads, Llanferres and the Llanarmon junction to the Clwyd Gate. I have asked Darren Millar to enquire what these changes mean for us.

We have had confirmation that the flashing speed limit signs on the A494 through Llanferres will be installed by the WG but not until the financial year 23/24.

Fairy Glen

Local residents have raised a concern about the deterioration of the historic industrial buildings in Fairy Glen. Pictures have been sent to the Countryside Services team to see if they can assist.

Boundary Changes for Elections

Llanferres along with Llanarmon and Llandegla Community Councils opposed the Boundary Commissions changes to our ward. Sadly, the Boundary Commission only accepted our proposed name for the ward but they decided to move Llanferres into the Llanbedr ward. I have recently contacted the Counties Compliance Officer to see what is happening with the changes and if they will be in place for next year's local elections. It appears that the review across Wales is taking longer than expected and we still do not know if they will be agreed in time for elections in 2022.

Traffic Survey Maeshafn

The County have confirmed that they will undertake a survey in Maeshafn before they install traffic warning signs for the playground.

Pot Holes Rectory Lane

I have tried once again to get the pot holes repaired on Rectory Lane. Although it is an unadopted road I have argued that because it is a designated Boat DCC have a duty to keep it safe for walkers, riders and motorists. Watch this space.

Accident A494

There was an accident/collision involving three cars on the A494 between the two Llanarmon turnings on the 5th May. Fortunately, there were no injuries and the police advise that the accident was due to poor weather conditions.

Road Improvements

The County has announced that they will be spending £2.5 million pounds on the Denbighshire's roads this year. As Councillors many of us feel that to clear the back log of road improvements we need to increase this

by at least a further £1.5 million a year for the next five years. Sadly to resurface roads is a costly business and the recent resurfacing of the B5430 cost the tax payer £211k.

Burley Hill Quarry

The first meeting of the revived Burley Hill Quarry Liaison Committee has met and I was elected to chair the meetings. It appears that Tarmac have no immediate plans to reopen the quarry and the next meeting is scheduled for July unless their plans change.

The Grosvenor Estate have yet to submit a planning application.

239. Projects Update

- a. The Chair has re-seeded on the bare patches of grass in Maeshafn playing field and orchard area. Fixing the closer spring to the gate between the 2 area's is proving difficult and needs re-thinking

Action: Chair to complete before next meeting

- b. The Chair has had lengthy discussions with Denbighshire CC who say they the Council needs a license to install a bench on the old road through Tafarn y Gelyn at an annual cost of £189.

Action: Cllr Holland agreed to take this matter up on behalf of the Council

240. Maintenance in the Community

- a. The Chair has established that there is no need for PAT testing of the telephone kiosk and Christmas tree lights as this applies to small portable appliances. The current electrical inspection Test Certificate is still valid so no further action is required.

- b. The bench on A494 between Tafarn y Gelyn and Loggerheads has been repaired by David Clough who knew it had been damaged by Contractors cutting the hedge. The Chair questioned why it was on the Councils Asset register and Mrs Dillon stated the Council owned the original bench which had been destroyed by Contractors when the by-pass was build. It was later replaced by the Trunk Roads Agency so still belongs to the Council.

- c. Cllrs Ivy and Isla Watts left the meeting whilst the quote from White Oak Properties was discussed for the maintenance around the memorial area. Cllr Almond felt it was a reasonable quote and proposed it be accepted, Cllr Sheldon seconded and all Cllrs present voted in favour

Action: Clerk to ask Contractor to undertake the work

- d. Cllr Holland confirmed all drinking water fountains have been switched off by Denbighshire CC until Covid restrictions are lifted.

Action: Cllrs to consider if it should be repaired when restrictions are lifted

- e. The Chair has written to John Chapman to ask if the existing litter bin in the layby along the A494 where walkers park, can be replaced with a dual purpose bin for litter and dog foul waste.

Action: Chair to chase for response

241. Banking

The Clerk had sent Cllr Ivy Watts Aprils bank statements and accounts for her to check against internet banking transactions. Cllr Watts confirmed all was correct.

242. 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 May	£315.90
2. Debit card payment of GoTo meeting fee for March	£13.20
3. Debit card payment to Tesco for stationary	£10.95
4. Debit card payment to B&Q for spring closers and plants Maeshafn	£32.14
5. Debit card payment Woodworks – plants and top soil Maeshafn park	£93.90

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6. Debit card payment Spunhill – grass seed Maeshafn park	£75.48
7. Debit card payment Ink Trader – printer ink	£42.95
8. LPFRA – grant to pay insurance premium	£138.32
9. BHIB – insurance renewal premium	£746.20
10. St Berres Church – grant towards maintenance of churchyard	£500.00
Total	£1969.04

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

Action: Clerk to pay all bills on schedule

224. Other Matters Brought to the Councils Attention

- Cllr Sheldon stated he recognised the Clerk and Cllr Armstrong had spent a lot of time preparing the documents to respond to the 2 Freedom of Information requests. He and Cllr Almond proposed recompensing the Clerk for the additional hours she had worked. The Clerk thanked all Councillors for their support of her efforts but refused to accept the offer.
- Cllr Almond reported a significant increase in rats being seen in gardens in Cae Derwen and Cae Gwyn which he thought were coming from an empty property next to his. The solicitors acting for the owners of the property had agreed to pay for pest control measures. Cllr Holland offered to raise this issue with County as an increase in pests being seen was usually as a result of something having disturbed them for example heavy rain washing their nests away.
- No other matters had been reported to Councillors

The Chair thanked everyone for attending, Cllr Cordiner proposed closing the meeting, Cllr Isla Watts seconded, and the meeting was closed at 21.22 p.m.

**The next General Meeting of the Council will be held on Thursday 10th June 2021
starting at 7.30 pm by Video Conference**