

## Minutes of General Meeting held on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2022

### Present: Cllrs

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

### Apologies:

Paul Sheldon

### Not Responded:

Graham Davidson

### Members of the Public:

Hugo Watts  
Rachel Gibson  
Tony King – part time

### Guest:

Darren Miller MS

The meeting was held by GoTo Meetings video conference.

### 347. Apologies

Cllr Sheldon

### 348. Chairs Opening Statement

The Chair stated this was not a public meeting and thanked Darren Miller for attending. His presence was to answer questions from Councillors and time permitting would take questions from members of the public.

The Chair proposed bringing item 13 on the agenda forward as Cllr Holland needed to leave the meeting early. Cllr Almond seconded and all Councillors voted in favour.

### 349. Meeting Open to the Public

No comments

### 350. Declaration of Interest Statement

Circulated to Councillors prior to meeting

### 351. Declarations of Interest

None

### 352. Approval of the Minutes of Meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2021

Cllr Almond proposed accepting the minutes subject to the correction of a spelling mistake on page 4. Cllr Ivy Watts seconded and all Councillors accepted the Minutes as a true and accurate record.

### 353. Matters Arising from the Meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2021

167/4	Still awaiting a response from DCC regarding the dropped kerb at the entrance to Maes Ysgawen park. Cllr Holland had received an acknowledgement from DCC that the matter was still being considered
220/b	Bench at Tafarn y Gelyn – still outstanding. Action: Chair to arrange meeting with contractor
259/1	New cork on noticeboard at Pant Du still needs replacing. Action: Chair to arrange
334	Completed 11.12.21
337	Completed 13.1.22
338	On agenda
339	Completed 11.12.21
340	Completed 13.12.21
342/a	On agenda
342/b	Still outstanding – Action: Chair to obtain price for bench at Tafarn y Gelyn

342/c	Completed 21.12.21
342/d	On agenda
343/a	Completed
343/b	On agenda
343/c	Still outstanding – on agenda
345	Completed 9.12.21
346/2	Completed during December
346/3	Completed 13.1.22
346/6	Completed 11.12.21

## **354. County Councillors Report December 2021**

### Cae Derwen Trees

I am pleased to report that the trees which are owned by Morris Homes in Cae Derwen Llanferres have been eventually pruned.

### Verges

I have asked the County to honour its commitment to cut the verge in front of the Druids Inn to ensure visibility at the Rectory Lane junction with the A494. As a compromise the remainder of the wild flower meadow in front of the Church will remain.

### Flooding at Ffordd Maeshafn

The work to resolve the flooding on Ffordd Maeshafn just before the Gwernymynydd junction with the A494 will commence on the 10th January and should be completed by the 14th January.

### Parking Bays

As from the 12th January work should start on the parking bays at the top of Forestry Road between the Toilets and the Penbarras Car Park. There will be fifteen bays in all which will be for short stay parking and they will be free for the time being. The parking will be monitored by the park rangers and these improvements form part of the overall review of parking and access to the Moel Famau Country Park.

### Parking Restrictions

I met with officers from DCC Highways and Countryside services on the 10th to discuss the results of the public consultation regarding the proposed parking restrictions on Forestry road. It looks as if there will be double yellow lines from the Penbarras Car Park down as far as the entrance to the Saw Mill. This should ensure that visitors to Bryn Ethin can still park where they have in the past. There will also be gaps in the yellow lines by the forestry cottages to allow for resident parking.

The need for further signage in the area will be monitored and installed if required.

### Larch Trees at Moel Famau

I have already circulated maps of the planned felling of Larch trees at Moel Famau which again will commence towards the end of January. Some footpaths will be closed for Health and Safety reasons as will the road between the Toilets and the Penbarras Car Park. Please look out for the road closure signs.

### Avian Flu Alert

There is an Avian Flu alert out across the UK and anyone who owns Chickens, Ducks, Geese, Pigeons and any domestic birds should be keeping them indoors until further notice.

This virus has been identified in the wild bird population and if you feed the wild birds you should wash your hands after touching any bird feeders and wash and disinfect the feeders on a regular basis. Humans can catch Avian flu but it is a rare occurrence in the UK.

### Visibility Joining A494 from Rectory Lane

Denbighshire CC have confirmed with cut the wild flower verges in front of the church to ensure visibility is maintained when joining the main road.

## Burley Hill Quarry

The deadline for responding to the planning application has been extended until the end of January 2022 and will be considered in the February or March committee meeting.

## 20 mph Speed Limits

Reducing speed limits from 30 to 20mph in Llanferres and Llanarmon are on hold pending new legislation.

## Flashing Speed Signs

Have still not been installed along the A494 going through Loggerheads 12 months after they were promised.

### **355. Questions for Darren Millar and Answers**

Darren Millar thanked the Council for the opportunity to join the meeting and engage with Councillors. He was asked the following questions:

Q1. Did he know why the External Audit due for completion at the end of September 2021, was still outstanding and why the audit office had not communicated with Councils?

A. The audit office was inundated with work following changes in audit requirements and is likely behind schedule due to capacity issues. He will approach the Auditor General to see where they were up to with LCC's audit.

Q2. Had the Welsh Assembly considered the implications for small Community Councils with no facilities, when giving 2 months' notice of changes in legislation requiring all councils to facilitate multi-location meetings?

A. Many smaller councils are still non-compliant with the legislation and he shared LCC concerns. As long as Councils can demonstrate they are making 'best efforts' to comply, it is unlikely that any action will be taken against them. The on-going consultation to draft guidance sets out how Councils are expected to meet the new Local Government and Election Wales Act which included multi-location meetings, expires on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2022.

Q3. Did the Welsh Government consider how difficult it was for small councils to recruit clerks, let alone qualified ones, when they introduced legislation due to come into effect on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2022 requiring them to be suitably qualified in order for Community Councils to exercise a 'General Power of Competence'?

A. Without the GPC Councils can only undertake activities that the law specifically empowers them to do. With the GPC Councils can undertake any activity that the law does not specifically prevent them from undertaking. The changes present challenges to Councils and existing Clerks. There are discussions in the Senedd which could have a vote to annul the qualification requirements.

Q4. Are there any plans to introduce a common conservation policy between DCC, NRW and WAG to prevent owners of small parcels of woodland felling trees and building cabins as their actions conflict with Government plans to plant many new forests?

A. He was aware of the activity in Big Covert and the unintended consequences and inconsistencies this creates and will raise the issue with Ministers.

Q5. Can the planning application to extend the working life of Burley Hill quarry be referred to Welsh Government as stated in MYAN 1 when a quarry is obsolete and in an AONB?

A. His view was that this is breach of national policy that seems to qualify for a referral. There are many people working on opposing the application and it would be better to wait for Denbighshire's decision to see if they have taken due notice of this. If they haven't he will encourage ministers to intervene. In the

meantime the more residents opposing the application, the more likely DCC will be persuaded to reject the application.

Q6. Why were the Councils views not considered before the boundary changes went ahead when there were errors in the numbers used to make the decision?

A. He agreed the change made little sense and the decision to go ahead was disappointing.

Q7. Why have the flashing speed reduction signs along the A494 at Loggerheads still not been installed one year after being promised?

A. He will chase this matter and report back to the Chair.

On a more general note there are plans to introduce legislation reducing all 30mph zones in Wales to 20mph to improve road safety and trials are already underway in urban cities in South Wales. It is highly likely the changes will be rolled out throughout the country.

There are also plans to introduce powers to enable charges for using trunk roads to reduce noxious emissions and the government is being lobbied to drop these plans as they would lead to increased emissions and congestion on smaller road when people take alternative routes to avoid the charges.

Q8. What plans are in place to install more electric car charging points?

A. A plan was published at the end of 2021 which looks encouraging.

### **356. Correspondence List**

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

1. Deadline for application for Green Flag Award for Maes Ysgawen park and Maeshafn Playing Field is end of January 2022. After due discussion Councillors agreed there were benefits in winning these awards. Action: Clerk and Cllr Curtis to complete and submit application forms.
2. Notification of changes in legislation coming into effect in May 2022 were discussed with Darren Miller.
3. The bird and bat box building workshop is taking place in Maeshafn playing field on 5<sup>th</sup> February and they are being installed on 12<sup>th</sup> February. Action: Cllr Morgans and Clerk to circulate information to residents.
4. Welsh Governments draft budget for 2022-23 included estimates of the effect of increasing income tax on revenue and the likelihood of residents leaving Wales. Cllr Almond stated that Denbighshire CC council tax was to increase by 2.95% from April.
5. The quarterly compliance scan of the website had been received from Aubergine. Action: Clerk update website to as needed.

### **357. LPFRA Lease Agreement**

Cllr Armstrong has lodged the new lease agreement with the Land Registry and is waiting for confirmation. Action: Cllr Armstrong to provide Clerk with receipt for payment when available.

### **358. News & Views**

Cllr Morgans and the Clerk had met with the publisher of News & Views and notes of the meeting had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting for consideration. After due discussion Cllr Morgans proposed continuing to support the publication by paying a £500 lump sum grant. Cllr Curtis seconded and all Councillors voted in favour. Action: Clerk to arrange payment.

## 359. Planning Applications

21/2021/1271 – St David's Cadole. After due discussion Councillors had no objections to the application.

Action: Clerk to notify Planning

21/2021/1194 – Burley Hill Quarry extension of planning application. Details in the non-technical report were discussed at length and Councillors agreed to submit further details of the Councils objections to the application. Action: Cllr Morgans to draft the letter and circulate to Councillors for comment before submitting to planning.

## 360. Projects Update

- a. Multi Location meetings - broadband has still not been connected in Llanferres village hall. Action: Leave updating Standing Orders until the Council is able to access the facility.
- b. Tafarn y Gelyn bench - Action: Cllr Morgans to plan installation with Contractor and obtain price for bench itself.
- c. Operation London Bridge – Cllr Morgans had met with the Vicar and it was agreed the public would be asked to place all floral tributes around the war memorial and a book of remembrance would be available in the Church.
- d. The Queen's Platinum Jubilee – Cllr Morgans stated trees need to be planted in March to optimise growth with the plaque installed later around the date of the celebrations. Cllr Curtis suggested an Oak tree and Cllr Morgans suggested a wild Service tree found in ancient woodlands seemed appropriate. It was agreed 4 trees would be planted in total at an estimated cost of £160 to be planted in Maes Ysgawen park and Maeshafn orchard area. Action: Cllr Morgans to obtain cost of plaque and Clerk to put on agenda for February meeting.

## 361. Maintenance in the Community

- a. Millennium water fountain – Cllr Morgans stated the Council may have to take on responsibility for the safe delivery of drinking water to the general public having read Regulation 9 of the water supply regulations. Action: Cllr Armstrong to investigate and report back at next meeting.
- c. Llanferres noticeboard – The Sign Workshop have not yet responded to request for quote. Action: Cllr Morgans to chase and report back at next meeting.

## 362. Banking

- The Clerk had sent Cllr Ivy Watts the December bank statements and accounts for checking against the Internet banking transactions. Cllr Watts confirmed all were correct.
- HSBC are now charging for banking transactions which could be around £100 per year. The Clerk had spoken to other clerks and found NatWest and Barclays had also implemented bank charges from January 2022 so it looked like the days of free banking were over. Given the time it took to change signatories on the bank accounts 2 years ago Cllr Armstrong proposed staying with HSBC, Cllr Ivy Watts seconded and all Councillors voted in favour.

## 363. Third Quarter Financial Review

Income from April to December 2021 was £20873.53, expenditure £9534.46 giving a surplus of £11339.07. Forecast to end of March 2022 was income £20873.53, expenditure £13414.46 giving a surplus going into reserves of £7459.54 excluding any VAT refund. There is also £4850 ringfenced for election costs and Councillor payments. The ratio of reserves to precept is estimated to be around 50%.

## 364. Payment of Bills and Invoices

The following bills were presented for authorisation to pay

1. AVOW – payroll invoice for January 2022	£315.90
2. GoTo Meetings – Video conference fee for January meeting	£13.20
3. Home Bargains – plastic boxes for archives	£10.98
4. Lawn Order – autumn treatment Maesahfn village green	£40.00
5. White Oak Properties – hedge cutting and repairs to culvert	£90.00
6. News & Views – grant toward publication costs	£500.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£970.08</b>

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

Action: Clerk to pay all bills on schedule.

## 364. Other Matters Brought to the Councils Attention

1. Cllr Sheldon's wife had their baby today. Cllr Curtis asked if flowers could be sent. All Councillors agreed.
2. Cllr Morgans had been asked if 2 x 20mph speed signs could be erected in Llanferres. Action: Cllr Morgans to respond advising of planned change to legislation reducing all 30mph zones to 20mph.

The Chair proposed closing the meeting, Cllr Armstrong seconded, and the meeting was closed at 21.15 pm.

**The next General Meeting of the Council will be held on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2022  
starting at 7.30 pm by GoTo Meetings Video Conference**