

Minutes of General Meeting held on 11th July 2024

Present: Cllrs

Allan Morgans – Chair
Jac Armstrong – Vice Chair
Paul Sheldon
Lyn Gibson
Margaret Narburgh – Clerk

Apologies:

Amanda Curtis

Members of the Public:

2 members of the public were present

Not Responded

HO Williams

This was a face-to-face meeting with no requests to join by video link.

832. Apologies

Cllr Curtis sent her apologies due to being on holiday.

833. Meeting Open to the Public

A member of the public asked the Council if it could write to Denbighshire CC asking for the road between the S bend and the entrance to Maeshafn village to be resurfaced due to the increasing number of potholes that have appeared. The Chair responded that a request had already been sent and he would chase it. Action: Cllr Morgans to contact DCC.

834. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Morgans declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Part II. Action: Clerk to send Declaration of Interest form for completion.

835. Approval of Minutes of Meeting held on 13th June 2024

Cllr Gibson proposed they be accepted as a true record of the meeting, Cllr Sheldon seconded and Cllr Morgans voted in favour. Cllr Armstrong abstained due to him not being at the meeting. There were no votes against and the motion was carried.

836. Matters Arising from Meeting on 13th June 2024

815	Completed 14.6.24
816	Completed 14.6.24
822	Completed 17.6.24
823	Completed 17.6.24
824	Completed 22.6.24
826	Completed 14.6.24
827.2	Completed 14.6.24 - no response received from Adam Turner re the buildings in Big Covert
827.3	Completed 14.6.24 - resident informed that there is no space for a bus shelter in Maeshafn
827.4	Completed 14.6.24
829	Completed 14.6.24
830.2	Completed

837. Correspondence List

1. LPFRA had asked the Council if it could provide any financial assistance to pay their insurance premium of £491.07. After due consideration Cllr Armstrong proposed a grant for the full amount, Cllr Morgans seconded and Cllrs Sheldon and Gibson voted in favour. There were no abstentions or votes against. Action: Clerk to notify LPFRA and arrange payment.
2. Denbighshire CC had responded to the request for a bus shelter in Maeshafn stating that this was not possible due to the lack of space to build one.
3. Denbighshire CC had issued a car park order covering Moel Famau, Loggerheads and Llangollen to formalise the parking arrangements in these car parks.

4. Llanferres Gardening Club thanked the Council for its grant towards their coach trip to Powys Castle.
5. Denbighshire CC had issued an update on missed household waste collections. The Chair commented that collections in Maeshafn appeared to be back to normal but the old bins had not yet been collected. Cllr Sheldon and a member of the public stated theirs had.
6. A local resident had asked the Council to reduce the height of the trees on the land between Rectory Lane and the school. The Clerk referred the matter to DCC as they own the land in question who responded to say the matter should be reported via their 'Report a problem with a Tree' function on their website. The resident was sent a copy of the response.
7. A resident had asked the Chair if the Council could provide any financial support to help the school with its' £44,000 shortfall in funding. The Clerk stated that the Council did not have any powers to provide funding to support the curriculum, but it could assist with small grants towards after school activities. She cautioned against giving a grant based on a verbal request from a resident stating that the Council should only consider formal requests from the school or its Governors. It was agreed that no action would be taken.
8. Keep Wales Tidy have awarded the Green Flag for both Maeshafn playing field and Maes Ysgawen park for 2024/25.
9. DCC have invited the Chair and the Clerk to attend a budget meeting on 17th July. Both will be attending.
10. The Village Hall have asked if the Council would replace the defibrillator pads for the machine outside the village hall which expire on 23rd August. The Chair stated that those in Maeshafn telephone box also expire on the same day. After due discussion Cllr Sheldon proposed purchasing 2 sets of the better-quality pads which last up to 5 years at £120 each exc VAT. Cllr Gibson seconded and Cllrs Morgans and Armstrong voted in favour. There were no abstentions or votes against. Cllr Armstrong suggested this expenditure be precepted for in future given the Ambulance Service no longer provides pads free of charge. Action: Clerk to notify village hall and arrange to buy.

838. 2024-25 Assets Risk Assessment

Cllrs Morgans and Sheldon completed the risk assessment on 5th July and reported a number of minor repairs and maintenance issues in need of attention. Cllr Armstrong proposed the Risk Assessment be approved, Cllr Gibson seconded, and Cllrs Morgans and Sheldon voted in favour. There were no abstentions or votes against and Cllr Morgans signed the assessment.

Cllr Morgans stated he would repair the bench in Maes Ysgawen park and clean out the shed in Maeshafn playing field following the flood. Cllr Morgans proposed White Oak Properties be asked to quote to undertake the rest of the repairs and general maintenance issues. Cllr Sheldon seconded, and Cllrs Armstrong and Gibson voted in favour. There were no abstentions or votes against. Action: Cllr Morgans to undertake the repair and cleaning and the Clerk to obtain a quote for the rest of the work.

839. External Audit

The Clerk reported she had received invoices for the 2020/21 and 2021/22 external audits at £5,431 and £2,037, respectively. She has twice asked the auditor for a detailed breakdown of the costs but had not received a reply. 2020/21 was a full transaction audit and the Council was made aware that the auditor would also be investigating a complaint made by a resident claiming financial irregularities in relation to Maeshafn playing field improvements. A higher than normal bill for this year was expected but not to this extent. 2021/22 was a standard audit with no known complaints and therefore the Clerk does not understand why this bill is so high. Based on her records, she had estimated both invoices equated to around 26 days' work which seems excessive. As a matter of course, the Clerk checks all invoices before payment but in this instance, she has nothing to check against due to the lack of information from the audit office. Cllr Sheldon felt this was license for the audit office to charge whatever it liked. Cllr Morgans felt the auditors had investigated matters that fell outside of their remit and the Council should not be charged for this. After due discussion Councillors agreed a formal complaint should be submitted to Audit Wales based on the lack of transparency. Action: Clerk to draft the complaint and circulate to Councillors for approval before sending.

840. Community Engagement

The Chair asked if Councillors felt there was any merit in creating a ‘Friends of the Council’ group to improve communications by emailing notices of Council activities and minutes of meetings to them. After due consideration it was agreed to see how residents react to posts on the new Facebook group before introducing anything else.

The Clerk suggested residents be notified that the Council now has a Facebook group by placing a notice in News & Views and on existing Facebook groups. Action: Clerk to arrange.

841. Maes Ysgawen Park Improvements

The Clerk had received written confirmation from the funding officer that the existing grant money could be reallocated. This would be to cover the cost of submitting a planning application and employing a Quantity Surveyor to prepare costings for use in the second grant application.

The sub-committee has analysed the indicative costings prepared by Harrisons and notified them of changes needed to ensure nothing was missed in the QS costings.

A Tree Impact Survey had been undertaken earlier today (this is required for the planning application) and Harrisons are preparing the other documents needed for submitting the planning application.

Action: Committee to continue monitoring Harrisons progress and report back to Council.

842. 1st Quarter Review of Accounts

April to June 2024		Forecast to end of March 2025	
Income	10281	19934	Excludes further income and expenditure funded by National
Expenditure	7474	30075	
Under/Over spend	2807	-10141	Due to much higher than expected external audit fees not precepted for

Effect on Reserves	£
Total funds end June	22587
Less overspend at end of March	-10141
Total reserves	12446
Less election costs	-2500
Less Cllrs allowance	-2872
Less balance AONB grant	-830
Available reserves	6244

equivalent to 33% of precept which is below 50% target.

843. Banking and Accounts

The Clerk reported that at the end of June there was £296.86 in the current account and £22,290.29 in the saving account. Cllr Sheldon stated that he had checked the bank statements against the internet banking and accounts for June 2024 and the transactions were all correct.

844. Payment of Bills and Invoices

The following bills were presented for authorisation to pay.

Date	From	For	Amount
6.7.24	AVOW - Wrexham	Payroll for July 2024	£542.30
6.7.24	AVOW - Wrexham	Payroll for August	£542.30
19.7.24	HSBC	Bank charges June 2024	£5.00
18.6.24	Travis Perkins	Weighted fixings for football nets	£71.51
22.6.24	Dinorben Arms	Meeting with Bodfari CC re Facebook	£9.95
30.6.24	Clerk	Expenses April to end of June	£120.60
27.6.24	J Reid Forestry	Pruning trees back boundary Maes	£1,080.00
19.6.24	Amazon	Solvent/adhesive for football net	£19.94
7.7.24	White Oak Properties	Ground care March to end of June	£980.09
7.7.24	Aubergine	Annual compliance and hosting fee	£507.90
Total Bills to Pay			£3,879.59

Cllr Sheldon proposed all bills be paid, Cllr Gibson seconded, and Cllrs Morgans and Armstrong voted in favour. There were no abstentions or votes against and the motion was carried. Action: Clerk to pay all bills.

845. Other Matters brought to the Council’s Attention

1. The Chair confirmed that NRW would not be taking any action to prevent flooding at the Pont y Mwynwr bridge so this matter was now closed.
2. AONB have sent an email to the Chair with an update on their activities and provided links to comments on the proposed creation of the new National Park. Action: Clerk to circulate information to Councillors and residents.

Cllr Morgans thanked members of the public for their attendance and asked them to leave before moving onto Part II. He proposed closing the meeting, Cllr Gibson seconded, and Cllrs Armstrong and Sheldon voted in favour. The meeting was closed at 20.15 pm.

846. Part II

Consideration of the complaint was deferred due to the complainant not having confirmed that the Council’s understanding of same to be correct.

Cllr Armstrong proposed closing the meeting, Cllr Sheldon seconded and Cllrs Gibson and Morgans voted in favour. The meeting was closed at 20.20 pm.

**The next General Meeting of the Council will be held on Thursday 12th September 2024 at 7.30 pm
in Llanferres Village Hall and by TEAMS video conferencing**