

Minera Community Council Meeting held on Thursday 22nd September 2022

Commencing at 7.15 pm at the Tyn y Capel, Minera

Present: Cllrs H Field (Chair), A Roberts, W Brown, J Wellens, N Jones, W Ollerhead, G Dillon, J Belton, D Kelly, T Grundy

Clerk: Mr D Hinchliffe

Apologies: Cllr D Gidlow

As the Council was meeting for the first time since the death of Her late Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, the Chair asked that all present stand for a minute of silence before the meeting was formally opened.

43/22 Declarations of interest

43/22.1 There were no declarations of interest.

44/22 Ratification of the minutes of the previous meeting

44.1/22 Having first confirmed that the date of 20 June on the heading of the circulated minutes was simply a typographical error on the part of the Clerk, the minutes of the meeting held on 20 July 2022 were proposed as a correct record by Cllr N Jones and seconded by Cllr J Belton.

45/22 Staff appraisal outcomes (Part 2 item – no public attendance permitted)

46/22 Matters arising from the minutes not otherwise dealt with in the agenda

46.1/22 The Clerk advised the meeting that all streetlight stickers were now in place. This project was therefore complete.

46.2/22 The Clerk would continue to secure the attendance of the new District Policing Sergeant at a future meeting – it was disappointing to note no response to requests sent during the past two months.

46.3/22 The Clerk had not yet discussed with One Voice Wales a face to face training option covering induction and Code of Conduct topics. He would additionally contact WCBC to establish what training resources could be made available from its resources.

46.4/22 The Clerk had formal confirmation of the contract terms from the successful bidder for the renovation of Gwynfryn play area. A start date for the works was anticipated shortly, but still awaited.

46.5/22 Cllr J Wellens advised the meeting that he was continuing to engage with WCBC to clarify the particulars of ownership of the football field. Enquiries to date had established that both WCBC Environmental Services and Minera School had beneficial interests in the land.

46.6/22 Cllr J Wellens advised the meeting that the Clywedog Valley Partnership had successfully cleared the first hurdle in the process of gaining lottery funding for development of the Clywedog Valley Trail and its assets.

46.7/22 Cllr J Wellens also advised the meeting that he was continuing to pursue as speedy a resolution as possible to the failed fencing opposite Minera School. Key staff at WCBC had been on leave at short notice, but it was hoped that this issue could now be addressed in the near future.

46.8/22 The Clerk advised the meeting that the SLA for the provision of Youth Services by WCBC was now ready for signature. This would be enacted once the exact commencement date for the service had been confirmed to the Clerk.

47/22 Co-option of one Councillor – to decide whether to pursue co-option at this time

47.1/22 The Clerk reminded Councillors that one vacancy on the Council remained open following the elections in May, and that a decision whether or not to seek co-option to fill the empty seat had been deferred until the September meeting. Following a short discussion Cllr G Dillon proposed and Cllr N Jones seconded that the Clerk be empowered to put in motion the process of seeking candidates to put themselves forward for consideration to fill the current vacancy.

48/22 Police report – to receive an update from the local policing team

48.1/22 The Clerk advised the meeting that he had not met the PCSOs in person since the previous meeting, but had kept in verbal and documentary touch. The chief topic of conversation had been the spate of petty vandalism in and around Minera play area. The Clerk had been advised shortly prior to the meeting that one individual, named several times in enquiries made by the PCSOs into the incidents of damage, had been spoken to, and that the situation continued to receive close police attention. It was hoped that the very clear message that the problem was receiving continuous attention would prove to be an effective deterrent.

49/22 Footpath issues – report on activities and consideration of recognition of voluntary support received on behalf of Minera Community Council

49.1/22 Cllr T Grundy advised the meeting that the committee had met and devised a more methodical method of coverage of the paths in the Minera Ward. Reports were being produced, which the Clerk was forwarding promptly to WCBC to highlight issues recorded.

49.2/22 Cllr N Jones summarised the work done by his son to install waymarkers and ‘no cycling’ signs. The installation of the latter had caused a degree of friction, with a number of signs removed, some forcefully. It had transpired that some were removed by the SCBC Ranger Service, and the Clerk was now in dialogue with the Ranger in question to clarify the position as regards mutual use of local paths by walkers, cyclists and horse riders.

49.3/22 The Chair passed on the Council’s thanks for the work performed by Cllr Jones’ son, adding that she believed it would not be possible to recognise his input financially due to established standing orders relating to non-commissioned services. She would discuss the matter further with the Clerk and Cllr Jones.

50/22 Minera Community Council Chair’s report – summary of activities and review of items for discussion and decision

50.1/22 The Chair had circulated a summary of her activities ahead of the meeting, and drew attention to a number of items:

50.2/22 A session of Code of Conduct training held by One Voice Wales using Zoom had taken only 1.5 hours, and was highly recommended to all Councillors.

50.3/22 A visit had been made to Minera Hall to meet a couple who were seeking to develop the grounds as a nature garden for the community. A copy of their agreement with the landowners had subsequently been sent to the Clerk, who in turn would visit the site in due course. Developments would be monitored from time to time, and any concerns addressed promptly.

50.4/22 Friends of Nant Mill had asked for financial support relating to a duck race and fun day to accompany the Weatherman Walking filming activities on 26 September. Following a brief discussion Cllr W Ollerhead proposed and Cllr N Jones seconded that £168 – the cost of insurance for the day – be donated to Friends of Nant Mill from the Civic Budget.

50.5/22 An invitation to purchase tickets for the Mayor’s charity dinner dance on 7 October had been received at a cost of £40 per head. The Chair asked anyone interested in attending to advise the Clerk.

50.6/22 Following a brief discussion, it was agreed that the Chair’s dinner, held over from the Spring following the death of Cllrs John Edwards and Wyn Blaze, would be held at the Tyn y Capel on 14 October.

51/22 Borough Councillor’s report – summary of activities and presentation of proposals relating to a community news platform initiative

51.1/22 Cllr J Wellens advised the meeting that August had been a quiet time, as was customary, made even more so on this occasion by the suspension of activities during the period of national mourning. Nevertheless a first constituency surgery had been held, with a

small but engaged attendance, and a further surgery was now scheduled for 27 October at the Tyn y Capel.

51.2/22 The plan for major highway works had been published within WCBC, and from this nothing was scheduled to take place in Minera. A series of ‘walkabouts’ around the Ward would be conducted nevertheless with a view to identifying and promoting areas of concern with respect to damaged road surfaces.

51.3/22 Cllr Wellens felt that a community news platform, similar to that run successfully in Bwlchgwyn, would be of benefit to the Minera communities. Central to the success of such an initiative would be a periodic hard copy news sheet. Following brief discussion, Cllrs W Brown and G Dillon agreed to meet with Cllr Wellens to set out the basic criteria for creating and realising such an initiative, and would bring their collective thoughts to a future meeting for further consideration.

Susanne Allcroft now joined the meeting

52/22 Community Agent’s report – summary of activities

52.1/22 Susanne had circulated her report prior to the meeting, and drew attention to a number of items:

52.2/22 Social activities were gaining a lot of momentum. The first Tai Chi session had attracted 34 people, and it was hoped to add an evening session as well. There was strong interest in an Arts and Crafts group being set up as an extension of Coffee Companions, and a grant to support it had been applied for. The latest coach trip on 29 September had also sold out very quickly.

52.3/22 Progress towards establishing a dementia village continued, albeit a little slowly. A publicity walk around Coedpoeth was planned with the Coedpoeth Agent, and a trip to the 1950s museum in Denbigh was being researched – this would need a small bus due to access restrictions.

52.4/22 coffee Companions was still meeting in the church, but the problem of heating would soon be an issue. The Lead Mines was a good alternative venue, but potential hire costs were still prohibitive. A possibility of using facilities at the school was being looked into, with the school being particularly keen to offer meeting space if feasible.

52.5/22 The Glyn Ceiriog Agent had set up a ‘warm space’ under the current initiative being championed by WCBC and other bodies. This would be one topic of discussion at an energy crisis meeting to be attended by community and public representatives at Plas Madoc on 30 September.

The Chair thanked Susanne for her continuing excellent work in the community, endorsed by all present, and was pleased to record that a commendably good appraisal had been submitted by the Clerk and supported by all Councillors. Susanne now left the meeting.

53/22 School Governor’s report – summary of activities

53.1/22 Cllr W Ollerhead had circulated his report ahead of the meeting, and drew attention to a number of points:

53.2/22 The school was anticipating a short notice visit from Estyn at any time. Estyn was behind on its schedule of inspections, and was therefore attempting to catch up the backlog, meaning that forward notice could be curtailed. There were currently 3 vacancies for Governors.

53.3/22 The football field was being used for sports activities, and was providing a very welcome extension to the available facilities.

53.4/22 Cllr J Wellens confirmed that he had been in touch with the school to offer himself as a candidate for one of the open positions as a Governor.

54/22 Correspondence – summary of items received: the Clerk will highlight any issues requiring attention and provide any clarifications

54/22.1 The Clerk had circulated a summary of correspondence received since the previous Council meeting. Although a long list covering two months on this occasion, there were no issues requiring further scrutiny that were not part of the agenda for this meeting.

55/22 Grants and donations

55.1/22 The Clerk advised the meeting that a request for support had been received from Hope House, and a further communication had been received from Cerebral Palsy Cymru, outlining – as requested – activities conducted in the Wrexham area, and confirming that no local support group which could receive a donation, rather than donating to central funds in Cardiff, was available.

55.2/22 Having confirmed that support to Hope House had not already been provided during the current fiscal year, as required by the Council's Gifts and Donations Policy, Cllr J Wellens proposed and Cllr J Belton seconded that a donation of £200 be made in favour of Hope House.

55.3/22 Following a short discussion, it was decided not to support Cerebral Palsy Cymru at the present time.

56/22 Financial matters – to approve the month's financial statement and schedule of proposed payments

56.1/22 The Clerk briefly explained the financial activities for the period, and the details of payments proposed to be made. In addition, he had provided for Councillors a summary of the expected depletion of reserves as a result of renovating Gwynfryn play area, renovation of the New Brighton phone box and the continuing cost of installing defibrillators across the Minera Ward. This summary, which also detailed the cost of the New Brighton phone box beyond the initial estimates available in March 2022, showed that the Council would retain a healthy and workable reserve balance once all obligations had been discharged.

56.2/22 The financial statement for the period was proposed for acceptance by Cllr G Dillon and seconded by Cllr J Belton. The schedule of payments, shown below, was proposed for approval by Cllr J Belton and seconded by Cllr N Jones.

Agent salary for July		871.73	
HMRC - tax and NHI on Agent salary for July		38.10	
S Allcroft - payment of Agent expenses for July		52.29	
One Voice Wales - training session for Chair		35.00	
Clerk salary, August		401.06	
Clerk HWA, August		20.00	
HSBC - bank charges for August		5.00	
SSE - electricity bill for July		358.84	
Salix - loan repayment		1,463.70	
Agent salary for August		871.33	
HMRC - tax and NHI on Agent salary for August		36.10	
D Hinchliffe - tax refund received		1.20	
D Hinchliffe - Clerk's expenses, August/September		83.76	
X2 Connect - New Brighton phone box		5,244.00	
One Voice Wales - Innovative Practice Conference		45.00	
SSE - electricity bill for August		358.84	
Clerk salary, September		401.06	
Clerk HWA, September		20.00	
Total to approve			10,307.01

57/22 Training plan – to review the draft plan and discuss any amendments

57.1/22 The Clerk had circulated to Councillors the proposed draft of a training plan, a final version of which was legally required to be published by 5 November.

57.2/22 Following a brief discussion, Cllr G Dillon proposed and Cllr A Roberts seconded that the plan as drafted should be published without delay.

57.3/22 Noting that the now adopted plan required all Councillors to undertake induction training once per election cycle, the Chair asked the Clerk to make enquiries of WCBC to obtain any induction training materials which might be publicly accessible.

58/22 SLCC Civility and Respect Pledge – to review the pledge as circulated by SLCC and if deemed appropriate, to ratify and adopt it

58.1/22 The Clerk had circulated the document received from SLCC to all Councillors, and stated that its contents were such as reflected the good governance and behavioural standards currently in evidence among members of Minera community Council. Nevertheless, in some Town, Community and Parish Councils there had been instances of bad behaviours and bullying which had made media headlines in the past couple of years, leading to SLCC asking for Councils to state their commitment publicly to a code of respectful and acceptable behaviour, as enshrined in the wording of the pledge.

58.2/22 Following a short discussion, Cllr W Ollerhead proposed and Cllr J Wellens seconded that the pledge be adopted and the Clerk be authorised to publish it on the website, and advise SLCC that this had been done.

59/22 Annual Report of Minera Community council for the year to 31 March 2022 – to review the report, noting any observations and amendments and, if deemed appropriate, to propose formal adoption of the document

59.1/22 The Clerk explained that Annual Report had already been published, as required by law for the first time with respect to the year to 31 March 2022. This report had been circulated to all Councillors prior to publication, but as this was the first meeting of the full Council since publication, a retrospective confirmation and adoption of the document was desirable, with any proposed changes made as required.

59.2/22 Following a brief discussion Cllr N Jones proposed and Cllr G Dillon seconded that the report as already drafted and published be formally adopted without amendment.

60/22 Planning matters – to consider items received from the Chief Planning Officer

60.1/22 Papers had been received in support of planning application P/2022/0695, works to trees at Old Vicarage Cottage, Church Road Minera. No objections or observations were noted in respect of this application.

60.2/22 Papers had been received in respect of planning application P/2022/0763, retrospective consent for erection of a fence at Arfryn, New Brighton.

The Clerk advised the meeting that he had received representations from residents concerned at the increased danger to pedestrians caused by the position of the fence at the road junction. The residents had requested consideration of an extra street light at the junction to alleviate this hazard, and had also expressed concern at the narrowing of the road by the occupant of the property concerned.

Cllr W Ollerhead advised the meeting that the current condition of the junction entrance was being affected by an accumulation of building rubbish previously stored on the property side of the new fence.

Cllr J Wellens confirmed that this area of New Brighton would be included on his schedule of walks in the Ward to ascertain what access and road condition issues were present.

60.3/22 Following a short discussion the Chair asked the Clerk to summarise the residents' concerns and communicate them to WCBC along with the Council's own wish to have confirmed that the fence in question did not exceed the permitted height, and was positioned entirely within the curtilage of the Arfryn property.

60.4/22 Papers had been received in respect of planning application P/2020/0756, works to trees at Pen y Nant, Church Road, Minera. No objections or observations were noted in respect of this application.

Meeting adjourned 2120 hrs.