

Minera Community Council Meeting held on Wednesday 23rd August 2023

Commencing at 7.15 pm at the Tyn y Capel, Minera

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

Clerk: Mr D Hinchliffe

Apologies: none, full Council in attendance

60/23 Declarations of interest

60/23.1 There were no declarations of interest.

61/23 Ratification of the minutes of the previous meeting

61.1/23 The minutes of the meeting held on 19 July 2023 were proposed as a correct record by Cllr T Grundy and seconded by Cllr A Roberts.

62/23 Matters arising from the minutes not otherwise dealt with in the agenda

62.1/23 Cllr J Belton advised the meeting that, due to holidays speed checks had not been conducted on the Old Road. These would be conducted during September. It had been noted, however, that a GoSafe van had been deployed on the Old Road, and the Clerk added that correspondence had been received from GoSafe confirming that this stretch of road was being monitored, although exact details of this activity had not been shared.

Cllr J Wellens added that he too had been written to by GoSafe and would be contacted further when results of the checks were available. These details would be shared at the next Council meeting.

62.2/23 The Clerk confirmed that he was seeking a date for a proposed presentation to a Projects Meeting of details of the new National Park, and that he would also seek to invite Julie Done of We Mind the Gap to this meeting to receive her outstanding presentation.

63/23 Part 2 item: annual appraisal reviews for the Clerk and Community Agent

These minutes relate to personnel issues and are restricted to Councillors.

64/23 Co-option – update on the co-option exercise in progress to fill the current vacancy for one Community Councillor

64.1/23 The Clerk had previously advised Councillors at the end of the period of co-option that one interested party had come forward and had circulated the applicant's letter of

interest and supporting statement. It had been hoped that this individual could have attended immediately prior to the meeting to meet Councillors, but work commitments prevented this.

64.2/23 Following a brief discussion a time and date convenient to a delegation of Councillors was chosen from details provided by the interested party. The Clerk undertook to liaise with all concerned and arrange the meeting.

65/23 Police report – to receive an update from the local policing team

65.1/23 The Clerk had not received a written report on police activities prior to the meeting but confirmed that PCSO Lydia Edwards was now once more part of the local team, albeit her shift pattern did not cover Wednesday evenings, precluding attendance in person at Council meetings.

65.2/23 Cllr J Wellens advised the meeting that he had met with local officers, who had confirmed that demand for police intervention was currently low. The Chair confirmed that, from her own liaisons with the community, the school holiday period had thus far passed peacefully.

65.3/23 No further instances of antisocial behaviour at Minera Hall had come to Councillors' attention. Nevertheless, it was noted that the promised palisade fencing had not yet been installed, and the Clerk undertook to seek an update on its intended installation from the landlord.

66/23 Footpath issues – report on activities

66.1/23 Cllr T Grundy advised the meeting that there was little of note to pass on at present. Paths were overgrown in parts, a feature of the time of year. A dead sheep had created an unpleasant environment on the old railway line. The Clerk confirmed that this biological hazard had been notified to him and had in turn been notified to WCBC and it was understood that the carcass had now been removed by a fallen stock contractor.

66.2/23 Cllr J Wellens advised the meeting that enquiries into the recent removal of a footpath sign in New Brighton had determined that this had been done to correct a path marking error, the sign now having been placed correctly.

66.3/22 The Chair noted that a gate at the top of Ty Brith Lane by the adjacent footpath needed repair work. The Clerk undertook to advise the Rights of Way team accordingly.

67/23 Minera Community Council Chair's report – summary of activities

67.1/23 Cllr H Field advised the meeting that she had not circulated a written report as all matters which would have appeared in it were suitably catered for in the agenda for the meeting. She had completed Code of Conduct training, which had been very valuable.

67.2/23 An annual dinner would be organised for a Friday evening in the early Autumn. As before, this would be at the Chair's expense, and an email would follow shortly requesting availability so as to be able to select a date.

68/23 Borough Councillor's report – summary of activities

68.1/23 Cllr J Wellens advised the meeting that WCBC was facing a significant funding deficit challenge, largely driven by the increased cost of adult social care. Mitigating actions would centre on management of vacancies and overtime, with a return to in-house servicing of the provision in the longer term.

68.2/23 Cllr Wellens also advised the meeting that work was progressing to introduce the new 20mph speed limits from 17 September. At this stage, WCBC was reviewing a small number of roads for suitability as exceptions to the uniform new speed limit, with public consultation on such potential exceptions currently open. Updates to Councillors would therefore be provided as received.

Cllr Wellens confirmed that the full cost of the speed limit changes was being borne by Welsh Government with no impact on WCBC funds.

69/23 School Governor's report – summary of activities

69.1/23 Cllr W Ollerhead advised the meeting that no Governors' meeting had been held since the previous Council meeting due to the school summer holidays. An additional parent governor had been appointed, however, bringing the board up to full strength.

69.2/23 The next meeting would be convened early in the new term, and like other recent meetings would in effect be a progress review of the response to the Estyn review, with other items of business added to the agenda. The Governors acknowledged that forthcoming meetings would still likely be of long duration in order to complete the changes required by Estyn.

70/23 Community Agent's report – summary of activities

70.1/23 The Clerk gave a brief recital of Susanne's activities, as outlined in her report, in her absence.

70.2/23 The number of referrals continued to grow steadily. This was a good sign that the service was improving its reach, but pressure on the available time would be monitored. Agents from the Rainbow Centre were now engaged in serving the previously unprovided for neighbouring wards of Brymbo/Bwlchgwyn and Broughton.

70.3.23 A recent 'Task and Finish' meeting called to review the service provision within WCBC as a whole had raised open questions as to the coverage of the service (implying that some response to adults of 18 years and over was now expected and suggesting financial penalties for late or absent statistical returns). Clarification of these changes had been sought by the Clerk, so far without response.

70.4/23 The Chair noted her and Minera Community Council’s concerns for the apparent change in direction and administration of the Community Agent service and asked the Clerk to share any responses received with Councillors.

The Chair also added her now customary thanks to Susanne for her continuing valued and professional service to the Minera communities.

71/23 Correspondence – summary of items received: the Clerk will highlight any issues requiring attention and provide any clarifications.

71.1/23 The Clerk had circulated a summary of the month’s correspondence ahead the meeting.

71.2/23 Cllr W Brown enquired as to the background and status of the application for a new National Park. The Chair responded to advise that the initiative was being supported by the AONB, and that a presentation to Councillors in the Autumn at a Projects Meeting was being organised by the Clerk.

Cllr D Kelly added that National Parks have their own planning authorities, and a wide remit to influence agricultural practices, and that these would feature in any thorough discussion of the overall impact of the establishment of a new entity of this kind.

72/23 Grants and donations – to consider requests for financial support received.

72.1/23 The Clerk advised the meeting that the only request received in the month had been from Cerebral Palsy Cymru, a national charity with activities in the area. Following a brief discussion the Chair asked the Clerk to seek clarification, if available, of any more specific local benefit, and to bring the request back to a future meeting with any details received.

73/23 Financial matters – to approve the month’s financial statement and schedule of proposed payments

73.1/23 The Clerk briefly explained the financial activities for the period, and the details of payments proposed to be made, following which the financial statement for the period was proposed for acceptance by Cllr D Gidlow and seconded by Cllr N Jones and the schedule of payments, shown below, was proposed for approval by Cllr W Ollerhead and seconded by Cllr J Belton.

D Hinchliffe - Clerk salary, August	438.78
D Hinchliffe - Clerk HWA, August	20.00
HSBC, charges for July	7.24
SSE - electricity charges for July	336.07
S Allcroft, Agent salary for July	935.41
EE - mobile phone bill	13.38

Groundwork, room hire for July	100.00
D Hinchliffe, Clerk overtime for July	87.78
Coedpoeth Post Office - surgical scissors and gloves for Lead Mines defibrillator cabinet	9.48
Total to approve	1,948.14

73.2/23 Cllr T Grundy had undertaken an internal review during the month of project activities during the previous 12-24 months, and his report had been circulated to Councillors by the Clerk.

73.3/23 Cllr Grundy advised the meeting that the review had concluded that procedures had been followed, and that a documentary trail could be established for all decisions taken, albeit in some cases the ‘golden thread’ was convoluted due to the time taken to finalise and execute decisions. The review also retrospectively endorsed the decision to acquire a debit card for the Clerk’s use given the undesirable need to pass some significant expenditure through the Clerk’s own bank account with reimbursement through expenses prior to the card being acquired.

73.4/23 The Clerk endorsed and welcomed the report, noting the small areas of improvement highlighted. The Chair further commented favourably on the exercise, thanking Cllr Grundy for his time and diligence.

74/23 Planning matters – to consider items received from the Chief Planning Officer

74.1/23 A letter had been received relating to planning application P/2023/0511, two storey side and rear extension at Bryn Awel, Ffordd Uchaf, Gwynfryn. Following a brief discussion, no objections or observations were raised with respect to this application.

74.2/23 Noting comments made during the discussion, the Chair asked the Clerk, in notifying WCBC that no objections or observations were raised, to request that WCBC in future include in all applications for building extensions the dimensions of the existing as well as the proposed new structures.

Meeting adjourned 2040 hrs.