

**Minera Community Council Meeting held on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2023**

**Commencing at 7.15 pm at the Tyn y Capel, Minera**

**Present:** Cllrs H Field (Chair), D Kelly (Vice-chair), T Grundy, N Jones, J Wellens, A Roberts, K Coventry, G Dillon, D Gidlow

Clerk: Mr D Hinchliffe

**Apologies:** Cllrs J Belton, W Ollerhead

**102/23            Declarations of interest**

**102.1/23**        There were no declarations of interest.

**103/23            Ratification of the minutes of the previous meeting**

**103.1/23**        The minutes of the meeting held on 18 October 2023 were proposed as a correct record by Cllr N Jones and seconded by Cllr A Roberts.

It was noted that there was an error in the indexation of minutes within the draft document causing the duplication of certain numbers. The Clerk undertook to correct the indexation in the final version of the minutes, and any references to these amended minutes in what follows attach to the corrected numbering.

**104/23            Matters arising from the minutes not otherwise dealt with in the agenda**

**104.1/23**        Cllr J Belton had not yet returned the speed gun to the Clerk. The Clerk would seek to obtain it when he met Cllr Belton to assist in the hanging of the Christmas lights.

**104.2/23**        The Chair recorded her satisfaction at the turnout and content of the public meeting held on 2 November and encouraged all present to consider and look out for similar topics for such occasional meetings in the future.

**104.3/23**        The Clerk advised the meeting that North Wales Police had not yet responded to the request to consider a Community Safety Order to compel security improvements at Minera Hall. This would be pursued.

**104.4/23**        Cllr J Wellens advised the meeting that efforts continued to lobby for improved bus services to Gwynfryn and elsewhere within the Minera Ward. The principal obstacle was a lack of funding within the overall rural transport system. Efforts to keep the topic live and under review would continue, nevertheless.

**104.5/23**        The Clerk advised the meeting that administrative tensions with WCBC relating to the Community Agent service continued. A meeting had been organised on 5 December at Minera's instigation to attempt to resolve the remaining problems.

**105/23 Presentation by Litegreen (energy saving and surveying service from Bwlchgwyn)**

**105.1/23** The Chair welcomed two representatives from Litegreen, a local Community Interest Company focused on carbon literacy and related topics with a remit to ensure available grants and other funding for domestic decarbonisation are appropriately sourced and applied.

**105.2/23** Following a very informative presentation the Chair asked the Clerk to maintain a dialogue with Litegreen to ensure that any appropriate support or use of information channels was put in place. Slides from the presentation would also be shared among Councillors for further information.

The Chair thanked the representatives of Litegreen for their time, and they then left the meeting.

**106/23 Casual vacancy – consideration of initiation of the process to fill the vacancy which has arisen**

**106.1/23** The Clerk advised the meeting that the resignation of Cllr Will Brown had been acknowledged with regret, and that both he and the Chair had thanked him for his service to Minera CC. Further thanks and appreciation for Cllr Brown's time with Minera CC, and best wishes for the future were added by all present.

**106.2/23** The Clerk confirmed that the process to fill the vacancy would begin with a notice of invitation to residents to consider requesting an election, the outcome of which would determine whether an election was needed, or co-option could be undertaken instead.

**106.3/23** Following a brief discussion it was agreed by all present that the process be held in abeyance until after the Christmas break to facilitate greater public awareness of the vacancy. The Chair asked all present in the meantime to advise any interested parties to engage with the process in the new year.

**107/23 Police report – to receive an update from the local policing team**

**107.1/23** The Clerk had received a short summary of police activity in the previous month from PCSO Lydia Griffiths, and this had been shared with Councillors. At the request of PCSO Griffiths, the Clerk also passed on advice that the Wrexham area as a whole was currently experiencing a rise in burglaries with a request for vigilance during silent hours.

**107.2/23** Cllr J Wellens advised the meeting that he would be joining the two PCSOs on an evening patrol in the coming week, and that he had been made aware of a number of instances of prowlers being observed after dark, which would be discussed.

**107.3/23** Cllr D Kelly observed that trailers had been reported stolen in Glyn Ceiriog recently, and a trailer theft had also taken place in Bwlchgwyn.

## **108/23 Footpath issues – report on activities**

**108.1/23** Cllr T Grundy advised the meeting that he had spoken to the North Wales Wildlife Trust warden regarding erosion in Minera Quarry caused by sudden and heavy incursion of floodwater. The situation was under review.

**108.2/23** A resident had advised the Clerk of a footpath obstruction close to Lynwood. This had been raised with the Rights of Way team, establishing that the taped barrier in question was sanctioned for up to 48 hours to enable tree surgery works at an adjacent property.

**108.3/23** The Clerk advised the meeting that a resident had advised him of damage to the bench in Ffordd Bryn Madoc. The unit was badly damaged, apparently from a vehicle strike or similar, and a repair estimate had been sought. The Clerk would pursue this with a view to effecting as quick a resolution as possible.

## **109/23 Minera Community Council Chair's report – summary of activities**

**109.1/23** The Chair advised the meeting that she had attended the Coedpoeth Act of Remembrance on behalf of Minera CC. The weather had been very bad, in contrast to the pleasant conditions at the Minera event the previous day.

**109.2/23** The Minera Act of Remembrance had also been well conducted by the new Curate, Rev Emma Dale, and been well supported by both residents and the combined presence of the Royal British Legion and Salvation Army trumpeter.

**109.3/23** Following a brief discussion it was proposed by Cllr N Jones and seconded by Cllr G Dillon that donations from the Civic Budget of £150 be made to the Royal British Legion and £50 to the Salvation Army.

**109.4/23** Installation of the Christmas lights was briefly discussed, with 1 December emerging as the preferred date. 8 December would be a backup date, and the Clerk would advise Councillors of the final arrangements once he had confirmed them with Cllr J Belton.

## **110/23 Borough Councillor's report – summary of activities**

Two residents now joined the meeting, and Cllr J Wellens summarised a number of issues.

**110.1/23** Dialogue had been sustained relating to flooding issues at Eversley Court. Inspection had been conducted and work to widen watercourses was being initiated. The issue would be kept live to sustain progress. Cllr N Jones was also pursuing progress and Cllr G Dillon reported that, following unblocking of the culvert on the opposite side of the development, subsequent heavy water flows had been accommodated without issues.

**110.2/23** At the Chair's invitation, the two residents now addressed the meeting. They had spent substantial amounts of money to remedy flood damage, but now needed documents from WCBC to be able to further an insurance claim. A problem culvert had been excavated at the end owned by a private landowner, but not at the end on WCBC land, resulting in a

continuing need to protect property with sandbags. Drivers failing to stick to the 20mph speed limit were also sending waves of additional water down the residents' driveway. It was the residents' belief that excavation would resolve the ongoing issues.

**110.3/23** Cllr Wellens thanked the residents for their input, and requested copies of correspondence with WCBC so that he could help to expedite the missing paperwork. The residents undertook to provide this, thanked Councillors for their attention and left the meeting.

**110.4/23** It was also noted that the culvert below the Old Post Office in the centre of Minera was also now regularly being overwhelmed by storm water, and Cllr Wellens added this issue to his list of items to take further within WCBC.

**110.5/23** There was little new information to pass on relating to the bedding in of the new reduced speed limits, other than to report that the lead member for highways had undertaken to review all exempted stretches of road across Wrexham County Borough. Some 20mph signs were still needed in Gwynfryn, and these were being chased up.

**110.6/23** Cllr D Kelly observed that any further signage changes beyond those needed to initiate the national speed limit change would not be funded from Cardiff. Other pressures on WCBC budgets would therefore inevitably compete with the needs of such changes for available funds.

**110.7/23** Cllr A Roberts raised the issue of the deteriorated pavement surface leading from Coedpoeth to Bwlchgwyn along the A525. Cllr Wellens responded to advise that the issue was known and had been looked into. Unfortunately the path had been found to be below current legal minimum width and funds were not available to perform legally-compliant improvements.

### **111/23 School Governor's report – summary of activities**

**111.1/23** In his absence Cllr W Ollerhead had provided Councillors with the latest report from the Health and Safety Executive into conditions at the school. Councillors had found the details useful, and wondered if the Friends of Minera School might be able to assist with some of the issues raised. The earlier presentation by Litegreen had also raised some points which might be pertinent to the school's interest.

**111.2/23** Cllr G Dillon added that new heaters installed at floor level in St Mary's Church, replacing units previously mounted on the walls, had hugely improved conditions for the congregation in cold weather.

Susanne Allcroft now joined the meeting.

### **112/23 Community Agent's report – summary of activities**

**112.1/23** Coffee Companions is now regularly drawing a full house at the Lead Mines such that more mugs and cushions will be needed. The Christmas lunch has been booked and Groundwork continues to provide excellent support.

**112.2/23** North Wales Police have been booked to attend the 12 December meeting to discuss Winter security. The inventory of target hardening materials will be checked ahead of this meeting to see what might be distributable to help with basic home security improvements.

**112.3/23** Articles have been written for local magazines to raise the profile of the Community Agent service, and AVOW want to use the story of a recent new attendee at Coffee Companions as a case study to publicise their own outreach campaign.

**112.4/23** The scheduled meeting with WCBC on 5 December to clear the air following issues surrounding statistical reporting was welcomed. It was also hoped to glean from this meeting some outcomes from the recent Scrutiny Committee review of the service.

The Chair thanked Susanne for her continued good work, and Susanne then left the meeting.

**113/23 Correspondence – summary of items received; the Clerk will highlight any issues requiring attention and provide any clarifications**

**113.1/23** Following a brief discussion it was agreed that the Clerk should respond to a Welsh Government request for insight into perceptions of the democratic health of Town and Community Councils on behalf of Minera CC.

**113.2/23** Noting the current hiatus in the activities of the Town and Community Council Forum, Cllr J Wellens advised the meeting that pressure for a meeting of the forum earlier than the current promise of February was being maintained within WCBC.

**114/23 Grants and donations – to consider requests for financial support received.**

**114.1/23** A donation request had been received from We Mind the Gap subsequent to their presentation to the public meeting on 2 November. Following a brief discussion Cllr J Wellens proposed and Cllr N Jones seconded that a donation of £200 be made in favour of We Mind the Gap. All present were in agreement.

**115/23 Financial matters – to approve the month’s financial statement and schedule of proposed payments**

**115.1/23** 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 G Dillon and seconded by Cllr J Wellens. It was noted that the sum approved for SSE was an estimated value pending receipt of the invoice for October supply.

D Hinchliffe - Clerk salary, November	496.93
D Hinchliffe - Clerk HWA, November	20.00
HSBC, charges for October	5.00
SSE - electricity charges for October	370.00
S Allcroft, Agent salary for October	834.16
EE - mobile phone bill	13.19
Groundwork, room hire for October	125.00
D Hinchliffe, Clerk backpay 1/4/24 - 30/11/24	342.40
Netwise, domain renewals	84.00
One Voice Wales, training for Cllr K Coventry (Induction and Code of Conduct)	76.00
Tyn y Capel, hospitality at public meeting	24.60
Tyn y Capel, tea and coffee following Remembrance ceremony	24.50
<b>Total to approve</b>	<b>2,415.78</b>

**115.2/23** The Clerk also advised the meeting that sanction had now been given for the remaining defibrillator awarded by Welsh Government to be installed at the Tyn y Capel. Permission was therefore sought to allow up to £800 to be spent to procure and install the necessary heated cabinet on site, with retrospective approval of the actual sum spent to be given at the next Council meeting.

The Clerk had also sourced a suitable picnic bench for the New Brighton site as requested at the previous meeting. Together with anticipated installation costs, a sum of up to £750 would be needed to place the item securely on site, and permission was therefore also sought to pursue purchase and installation within this sum with retrospective approval of the actual amount spent to be given at the next Council meeting.

Cllr N Jones proposed, and Cllr T Grundy seconded that the Clerk's two requests be duly approved.

**115.3/23** The Clerk had circulated a first draft budget for 2024/25 ahead of the meeting, together with explanations of the key drivers of cost increases compared to the current year. Foremost among these was an assumption that the Youth Service provision would be funded in full from precepted money.

**115.4/23** Following a discussion the Chair asked the Clerk to consider the establishment of measured objectives for the Youth Service ahead of the next planned review of the service on 15 January 2024, and to research whether other providers of a comparable service were available. The budget should be revised to include any options that this research yielded ahead of formal approval of the 2024/25 at the January Council meeting.

**116/23** **Planning matters – to consider items received from the Chief Planning Officer**

**116.1/23** An email had been received relating to planning application P/2023/0690, erection of dwelling (all matters reserved) on land at Wern Cottage, Wern. No observations or objections were noted with respect to this application.

**116.2/23** An email had been received relating to planning application P/2023/0427, erection of dwelling (all matters reserved) The Hollies, New Brighton. No observations or objections were noted with respect to this application.

Meeting adjourned 2115 hrs.