

Minera Community Council Meeting held on Wednesday 17th April 2024

Commencing at 7.15 pm at the Tyn y Capel, Minera

Present: Cllrs, D Kelly (Chair), T Grundy, A Roberts, G Dillon, K Coventry, W Ollerhead, D Gidlow, J Belton

Clerk: Mr D Hinchliffe

Apologies: Cllr J Wellens

One resident was in attendance throughout the meeting.

161/23 Declarations of interest

161.1/23 There were no declarations of interest.

162/23 Ratification of the minutes of the previous meeting

162.1/23 The minutes of the meeting held on 13 March 2024 were proposed as a correct record by Cllr K Coventry and seconded by Cllr A Roberts.

163/23 Matters arising from the minutes not otherwise dealt with in the agenda

163.1/23 The Clerk advised the meeting that repairs to the bench in Bryn Madoc Road continued to be frustrated by bad weather. The work would be completed as soon as conditions allowed.

163.2/23 The Clerk had met the Youth Service team during the month for the quarterly review of the service and had advised them that Minera School could be used on evenings when outdoor conditions were likely to suppress participation. This would probably now not be taken up until the Autumn as the lighter evenings made the football field a more conducive location.

163.3/23 The Clerk advised the meeting that no response had yet been achieved with respect to the missing sign at the Lead Mines, and that this matter would continue to be pursued.

163.4/23 The Clerk advised the meeting that white lines would be added to the Gwynfryn football pitch once WCBC had provided the first cut of the grass. A date for this cut had still not been advised.

163.5/23 The Clerk advised the meeting that correspondence had been received earlier in the day to confirm that a grant application to fund renovations to the war memorial bus shelter had been unsuccessful, with a lack of proof of ownership being a key deciding factor. After a brief discussion the Chair asked the Clerk to research the possibility of registering the land in the name of Minera CC to forestall such issues in future.

163.6/23 The Clerk had contacted Calon FM to facilitate payment of a donation, and requested in return publicity for the North Wales Police Operation Cinnamon event.

163.7/23 As resolved at the previous meeting, the Clerk had written to WCBC to communicate concerns relating to the proposed change of use of Pen y Palmant Farm. To date no response had been received.

163.8/23 The Clerk had also maintained contact with WCBC with respect to the emergence of a planning application for the gate which had been placed across the football pitch access. No advice had yet been received of an application specifically for the gate, but a related application would be reviewed later in the meeting.

164/23 Co-option – update on the process to fill 3 vacancies for Community Councillors

164.1/23 The Clerk advised the meeting that the latest notice of vacancy had attracted one expression of interest for the three open positions. The interested party had hoped to attend the meeting but was not present.

164.2/23 Following a brief discussion the Chair asked the Clerk to prepare a further notice of co-option and to arrange for the interested party to meet Councillors ahead of the next Council meeting.

165/23 Police report – to receive an update from the local policing team

165.1/23 The Clerk had circulated a summary of incidents which had been provided by North Wales Police relating to March. There were no further questions arising from this summary.

165.2/23 The Clerk would separately keep in touch with the local policing team and in particular provide any practical support with publicity or signposting for potential interested parties for the Operation Cinnamon event in Bwlchgwyn in May.

166/23 Footpath issues – report on activities

166.1/23 Cllr T Grundy advised the meeting that issues relating to a claimed diversion of footpath 29 at the foot of the Pentre hill had been referred to Cllr J Wellens. Cllr Wellens had in turn sought clarification with the WCBC Rights of Way team, and a response was awaited.

166.2/23 Cllr Grundy also noted with satisfaction that the fence opposite Minera School had finally been repaired after a long wait. The repair was to a high standard and had noticeably tidied up the area.

167/23 Minera Community Council Chair's report – summary of activities

167.1/23 The Chair confirmed that he had nothing to report which would not be otherwise covered in the business of the meeting.

168/23 Borough Councillor's report – summary of activities

168.1/23 In the absence of Cllr J Wellens the Chair noted the advice provided by Cllr Wellens and the Clerk regarding developments in Eversley Court, where a large culvert had been discovered and was under investigation by WCBC. Initial findings suggested the culvert was contributing to the channelling of large amounts of storm water into the drains in and around Church Road, and that it was likely to have been installed as farmland drainage many years previously. Cllr Wellens and the Clerk would maintain liaison with resident of Eversley Court affected by recent flooding as investigations by WCBC were concluded.

168.2/23 Cllr W Ollerhead asked the Clerk to advise WCBC of a large pothole on the road into New Brighton with a view to getting at least a temporary repair as soon as possible.

169/23 School Governor's report – summary of activities

169.1/23 Cllr W Ollerhead advised the meeting that the Governors had been meeting regularly in recent weeks to try and forestall redundancies but had been unable to produce a plan acceptable to staff. As a consequence, a redundancy programme was now underway and was being administered by WCBC. Two staff had been also lost through non-replacement.

169.2/23 Estyn inspectors were expected to return at the end of April. It was hoped that the ensuing report would confirm further progress towards the required improvements.

169.3/23 The decision to impose an identical budget on the school for a second successive year would almost certainly result in a deficit position by the end of the year. Efforts were being made to find efficiencies and savings, but statutory pay and other increases made it extremely difficult to derive a balanced position.

Susanne Allcroft now joined the meeting.

170/23 Community Agent's report – summary of activities

170.1/23 A quiz night had been organised for 25 April at the Tyn y Capel in aid of one of the grandchildren of a Coffee Companions attendee. All support would be gratefully received.

170.2/23 A steady rate of referrals was being received from the social prescriber. Both local doctors' surgeries remained very poor at referring anyone to the Agent service, however.

170.3/23 A meeting had been attended at Minera School to explore potential opportunities for inter-generational events. Reading support and general volunteering were areas where the school could benefit from additional help, but DBS checks would be needed. Susanne and the Clerk would therefore establish costs and which stream of grant funding to use to support the ensuing costs.

170.4/23 Cllr W Ollerhead would also discuss with the Headmaster the possibility of Susanne delivering dementia awareness training at the school.

170.5/23 Useful contacts had been made at a recent ‘See and Be Seen’ event and pre-bookable bus services in Cheshire were being looked into to see if they could in any way suggest a workable model in North Wales.

170.6/23 Problems were still being experienced with heating at the Lead Mines. The Clerk would follow up with Groundwork to seek resolution of this ongoing problem.

The Chair once again thanked Susanne for her work in the community, and she then left the meeting.

171/23 Correspondence – summary of items received; the Clerk will highlight any issues requiring attention and provide any clarifications

171.1/23 The Clerk had circulated details of correspondence received in the month. Other than to advise the meeting that an application for a Key Fund grant to support renovation of the war memorial bus shelter had been unsuccessful he had nothing to bring to Councillors’ attention that would not be covered elsewhere in the meeting.

172/23 Grants and donations – to consider requests for financial support received.

172.1/23 Donation requests had been received from St John’s Ambulance Service and Friends of Bellevue Park, the latter being the organising body of the local DDay 80 commemorations.

172.2/23 Following a brief discussion Cllr J Belton proposed and Cllr D Gidlow seconded a donation of £100 to St John’s Ambulance Service. No donation was proposed in respect of the DDay 80 commemoration on the supposition that a more suitable marking of the occasion could be to renovate the war memorial in time for the anniversary in June. The Clerk would therefore communicate this position to Friends of Bellevue Park.

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

173.1/23 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 W Ollerhead and seconded by Cllr J Belton and the schedule of payments, shown below, was proposed for approval by Cllr G Dillon and seconded by Cllr D Gidlow.

S Allcroft, Agent salary for March	1,072.22
D Hinchliffe, mileage 23/24 and room hire for Youth Service meeting	77.10
D Hinchliffe, Clerk salary for April	544.59
D Hinchliffe, Clerk HWA for April	20.00
EE, mobile phone bill for March	13.00
SSE, electricity bill for March	398.73
HSBC, bank charges for March	5.00
Groundwork, Coffee Companions' room hire (March invoice, overdue for presentation)	100.00
OVW membership 24/25	287.00
AVOW membership 24/25	15.00
Total to approve	2,532.64

173.2/23 The Clerk had received a request from the Clerk to Penrycae CC, acting in her capacity as Clerk to the Lighting Consortium, for a letter of authority to enable a pooled energy supply contract to be considered, brokered by Utility Aid. Following a brief discussion Cllr J Belton proposed and Cllr W Ollerhead seconded that the Clerk be duly empowered to send such a letter on Minera CC's behalf.

173.3/23 The Clerk advised the meeting that a renewal quotation in the sum of £2,224.18 had been received, an increase of 6.7% and inside the precepted expectation of a 10% increase. Following a short discussion Cllr K Coventry proposed and Cllr J Belton seconded that the Clerk be authorised to accept the quotation and submit payment provided that scrutiny of the terms of cover did not reveal any reason to refrain from so doing. The Clerk would accordingly confirm the situation once documentation had been reviewed and would proceed to engage in obtaining alternative quotes if ultimately required.

173.4/23 The Clerk returned to the topic of the need to renovate the war memorial bus shelter and the unsuccessful bid for grant funding. Free reserves were just below £30,000 and £1,638 of recovered VAT would be expected to augment this sum in the near future. A clear case to undertake the necessary repairs from Council funds rather than continuing to attempt to gain grant funding was therefore emerging.

173.5/23 Following a short discussion Cllr W Ollerhead proposed and Cllr A Roberts seconded that the Clerk be authorised to offer the work to the preferred bidder from the three quotes received for the work, and to schedule the work for completion if possible ahead of the DDay 80 anniversary on 6 June.

174/23 Planning matters – to consider items received from Chief Planning Officer

174.1/23 Details had been received of a proposed footpath diversion adjacent to Talwrn Road, 5 Crosses. No objections or observations were recorded with respect to this application.

174.2/23 Papers had been received relating to planning application P/2024/0187, siting of shipping container and erection of shed at 54 Minera Hall Road, Minera (in retrospect). Following a short discussion the Chair asked the Clerk to respond in respect of this application to advise no objection with respect to the container and shed coupled with opposition to the installation of a locking gate at the point of access to the site of the container and shed, this being also the access route to the football field.

Meeting adjourned 2045 hrs.