

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of **RHUTHUN TOWN COUNCIL**  
held via Zoom video conferencing on Monday, 27 September 2021 at 7:00pm.

**PRESENT:** Councillors Heather Williams (Mayor), Menna Jones (Deputy Mayor)  
Councillors Stephen Beach, Jim Bryan, Gavin Harris, Ken Hawkins,  
Ethan Jones, Jabez Oakes, Robert Owen-Ellis, Anne Roberts, Mike  
van der Eijk and Ifan Wyn.  
County Councillors Bobby Feeley, Huw Hilditch-Roberts and Emrys  
Wynne.

**IN ATTENDANCE** Keith Ivens – Natural Resources Wales (NRW) for item 3 only  
Sergeant Rich Evans – North Wales Police for item 4  
Siân Clark – Town Clerk and Kate Harcus – The Old Courthouse  
Manager and Deputy Town Clerk

**82. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillors Rachel Lewington, Christine Ellis and Ian Lewney

**83. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Gavin Harris declared a personal and pecuniary interest in item 20 as an owner of a hospitality establishments and left the meeting for this item.

**84. PROPOSED RUTHIN FLOOD PARTNERSHIP**

Councillors discussed a proposal from NRW to form a Ruthin Flood Partnership. Information considered included the proposed partnership's terms of reference and membership. Keith Ivens from NRW's Flood Risk and Water Management Team stated that the purpose of a Flood Partnership was to strengthen build resilience, communication and co-ordination with the membership including Natural Resources Wales, Denbighshire County Council, Rhuthun Town Council and representatives from the community. Examples of previous and current Flood Partnership Groups were shared such as St Asaph, Llangefni and Bangor on Dee. Keith Ivens confirmed that NRW and DCC would support a single Flood Partnership in Ruthin should one be established. It was stated that Glasdir currently had an active localised community flooding group. It was hoped that Glasdir residents and others in affected areas in the town, would become members of the proposed single Flood Partnership for Ruthin.

Members expressed a strong view that the issues regarding flooding needed a holistic approach from the statutory bodies to manage and mitigate instances of flooding, some of which were as a result of blocked drains. Participation from local residents would be key to the success of any flood partnership, and it was stated that NRW would assist with encouraging such involvement.

Members were advised that Welsh Government was to publish imminently new planning policy advice in the form of Technical Advice Note (TAN) 15: Development, flooding and coastal erosion.

It was determined that establishing a Ruthin Flood Partnership, to include practical and strategic input from the statutory bodies, would be beneficial for the town. Finalised details as to membership and administration matters would be agreed separately. It was also determined that Town Council funds (sum to be determined) be allocated within the budget as a 'flood management' reserve.

The current concerns of residents of blocked drains in Clwyd Street were highlighted to the County Councillors in attendance.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) To approve the establishment of a Ruthin Flood Partnership Group*
- (ii) To finalise membership and administration matters separately*
- (iii) To allocate Town Council funds (sum to be determined) as a 'Flood Management Reserve'.*

**85. COMMUNITY POLICING**

Sergeant Rich Evans was welcomed to the meeting; his report had been circulated to members in advance.

Members commented favourably on action that had been recently taken in respect to anti-social driving in the town centre and the seizing of a car, and requested that the police's focus on anti-social driving in and around the town (including Park Road car park) continued. The issue of availability and use of drugs was raised. Sgt Evans advised the Town Council that in addition to engaging in high visibility patrols, a proactive police work was planned in mid-October which would focus on recreational drug use and drug enterprises. Any intelligence on such matters would be welcomed by the local policing team.

It was confirmed that an item on Community Policing would be on the December 2021 Town Council meeting as part of the regular three monthly update.

**RESOLVED:** *to acknowledge and note the work of the local community policing team.*

**86. MAYOR'S REPORT**

Councillor Heather Williams advised Members that in addition to the activities noted in the Mayor's Report, a report would be considered at the next Amenities Committee on the Mayor's Tree Planting Project.

**RESOLVED:** *to accept the content Mayor's Report.*

**87. MEMBERS' REPORTS**

**RESOLVED:** *to accept the Member's Reports as previously circulated.*

**88. RUTHIN COUNTY COUNCILLORS' REPORT**

In addition to the report as circulated, Town Council members were advised of the following points:

Cllr Emrys Wynne reported that it had been agreed by the Member Area Group (MAG) that the 'parklets' which had been temporarily placed on St Peters square, would be removed and would be placed in temporary storage.

Cllr Bobby Feeley reported that MAG had received a presentation about a proposed woodland creation in Cae Ddol. Subject to consultation, 1700 trees would be planted on 1.5 acres along with wildflowers.

Cllr Huw Hilditch-Roberts reported that (i) NRW had issued an enforcement notice on the Blazers. (ii) Proposals for the Levelling Up Fund, to include St Peter's Square, were progressing. (iii) The impact of Covid-19 on Denbighshire Schools was significant with instances of pupils and staff testing positive extremely high, with many others awaiting the outcome of PCR tests. The current situation was exceptionally challenging.

**RESOLVED:** *to accept the Member's Reports.*

**89. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS ORDINARY MEETING**

*RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 12 July 2021 be received and confirmed as a correct record.*

**90. MATTERS ARISING**

None.

**91. EMERGENCY POWERS COMMITTEE**

*RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 9 August 2021 be received and confirmed as a correct record.*

**92. MINUTES OF THE AMENITIES COMMITTEE**

Councillor Menna Jones advised Members that the meeting between Ruthin and Llanfair DC councillors, together with representatives from Denbighshire County Council which was to be held on 24 September would be rearranged for a date in October. The Amenities Committee had recommended the endorsement of several items for consideration later on the Town Council's agenda.

*RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meetings held on 26 July and 13 September 2021 be received.*

**93. MINUTES OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

Councillor Heather Williams advised Members that a meeting was held via Zoom between the Planning and Development, and Amenities Committees with NRW to consider the proposed embankments works at Cae Ddol. Works were due to commence in early October for a two week period. Delay to the project was due to ensuring appropriate consultation and undertaking modelling works to ensure that the works would not adversely affect others. No objections had been raised by the Committee to any planning applications submitted. In response to a comment submitted by the Committee about a replacement tree of a similar species at 1 Cae Castan, advice had been received from DCC that the tree replacement would be a common walnut due to the susceptibility of horse chestnuts to disease.

*RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 13 September 2021 be received.*

**94. MINUTES OF THE OLD COURTHOUSE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

Councillor Gavin Harris advised Members that; a review of moveable items within TOC would be undertaken and a review of risk assessments undertaken and; that an application to Clocaenog Wind Farm Fund would be made to fund digital and other signage. Responding to a query about the plaque which commemorated Owain Glyndwr's 1400 Campaign, which was unveiled in 2000, Cllr Harris stated that the plaque was safely stored within the Old Courthouse but, due to weathering, some restoration work was needed. The plaque would be re-positioned centrally to the outdoor panel of The Old Courthouse.

*RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2021 be received.*

**95. MINUTES OF THE HR SUB-COMMITTEE**

*RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meetings held on 5 July and 16 September be received.*

**96. DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL EVENTS INFRASTRUCTURE FUND**

Members considered a draft application to the Denbighshire County Council Events Infrastructure Fund which would be submitted by the Town Council. The application was to enhance the electrical supply in two locations on St Peter's Square (Ruthin Town Clock and The Old Courthouse) for use by community events at a total cost of £1,070

plus VAT.

A second proposed application for three mobility scooters at a cost of approximately £7,000, had been prompted by discussions with coach operators late the previous week. This application was at an initial stage and required further data. It was agreed that the application would be circulated to Members for comments.

**RESOLVED:** (i) To approve for submission the draft application to the events infrastructure fund to enhance electrical supply in two locations on St Peter's Square; and (ii) to circulate the second proposed applications for three mobility scooters for comments.

#### **97. PROPOSED RUTHIN VELODROME**

Members considered a report, previously circulated, which provided a current position statement on the proposed Ruthin Velodrome. Councillor Gavin Harris stated that an update with further details would be expected for consideration at the October meeting of the Town Council.

**RESOLVED:** to note the content of the report on the proposed Ruthin Velodrome.

#### **98. THE WAR MEMORIAL**

Members considered a detailed report, previously circulated, on the Ruthin War Memorial and proposed next steps, which had been endorsed by the Amenities Committee.

**RESOLVED:** that Ruthin Town Council:

- (i) funds part 1 of the project in its entirety in terms of payment of the architect's fees for the project of £3,920; and
- (ii) funds the legal costs of the Land Registry application of £800.00 + VAT.

#### **99. COACH DROP OFF POINT AND THE REAR OF THE OLD COURT HOUSE**

Members considered a report which outlined in principle proposals to modify the use of the area at the back of The Old Courthouse to enable better accessibility on pavements and to create e-charging bays. Additionally, the proposal also sought to create a designated coach drop off point at the front of The Old Courthouse. Councillor Gavin Harris informed Members that whilst the works would be considered for inclusion within the wider Levelling Up Fund bid, should it be required, the scheme could be progressed independently with funds available from the Public Realm budget heading. It was highlighted that the two plans attached to the report had been incorrectly labelled.

**RESOLVED:** that the proposals outlined for the area to the rear of The Old Courthouse and for the creation of a designated coach drop off point to the front of the building be progressed as appropriate (as part of the Levelling Up Fund or independently through the Public Realm budget).

#### **100. GYPSY AND TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION ASSESSMENT (GTAA) 2021 - CONWY AND DENBIGHSHIRE**

Members considered a draft response to the GTAA. In discussion Members sought clarification and confirmation of Denbighshire County Council's current position as to the county's provision for Gypsy and Travellers. County Councillors stated that appropriate provisions was a requirement of the Local Development Plan and that, whilst there was no designated site within the county, suitable sites were in the process of being identified. There was consensus that a site was needed within the county. During the recent encampment on Park Road, Denbighshire County Council acted promptly to supply toilets. It was determined that the draft, as circulated, be accepted with an additional comment outlining the need for a permanent site in Denbighshire and recognising that the County Council was undertaking steps to identify a suitable site.

**RESOLVED:** that the draft response, as circulated, be submitted with the additional point raised regarding the need for a permanent site in Denbighshire.

**101. PROPOSAL TO APPLY FOR THE OLD COURTHOUSE TO BE AN 'APPROVED PREMISES FOR MARRIAGE AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIP CEREMONIES'**

Members considered a report outlining a proposal for The Old Courthouse to apply to be an approved premises for marriage and civil partnership ceremonies. In discussion, Members raised queries regarding the outline costs, availability of parking, the extent of market research and data analysis undertaken and good practice learning from other similar venues. A concern was also expressed about the initial £1,000 outlay. The Manager of the Old Courthouse confirmed the basis of the comparative costings, outlined that parking arrangements would be as currently availability in the town, and re-affirmed the consultation undertaken with local businesses with links to weddings in the town. Good practice learning from other similar venues could be undertaken in parallel with the development of the venue as an approved premises.

Members commented positively on the potential benefits of holding such special ceremonies in the heart of the town including social media coverage, support for local businesses and licensed premises etc. Given the impact of Covid-19 and the extent of deferred ceremonies over the previous 18 months, the need to use comparative historic data analysis was queried. It was stated that The Old Courthouse was a business, a statement which Councillor Ethan Jones wished it minuted that he fundamentally disagreed with.

**RESOLVED:** *that an application be made for The Old Courthouse to be an 'Approved Premises for Marriage and Civil Partnership Ceremonies'.*

**102. RUTHIN FUTURE WORKING GROUP**

A verbal update was provided on activities undertaken in respect of Ruthin Futures and opportunities available for the Levelling Up Fund. A Ruthin Futures event would be held for a fortnight late October/early November. Additional participants to the working group were sought with Councillors Anne Roberts, Mike Van Der Eik and Jim Bryan volunteering to join Councillors Heather Williams, Menna Jones and Gavin Harris.

**RESOLVED:** *that the Working Group membership consist of: Councillors Heather Williams, Menna Jones, Gavin Harris, Anne Roberts, Mike Van Der Eik and Jim Bryan.*

**103. DATES OF MEETINGS FOR 2022**

**RESOLVED:** *to approve the dates for next year's meetings and to note that the Mayor's Charity Dinner would be held on Saturday, 12 March 2022.*

**104. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND VAT UPDATE**

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) *To accept and approve the financial statement for the periods ending 31 July and 31 August 2021*
- (ii) *To note that Ruthin Town Council was now registered for Value Added Tax.*

**105. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT**

The following items were approved for payment:

OB	Microsoft	Microsoft 365 monthly fee	*	
		18/08/2021 – 17/09/2021		£18.96
		19/08/2021 – 18/09/2021		£18.96
OB	Jackson Transport Service	Removal services (Town Hall to The Old Courthouse)	*	£264.00
OB	J & C Brimble	Watering RTC Planters w/c 04/08/2021 to w/c 05/09/2021		£818.80
OB	Denbighshire County Council	Relocation of flower baskets	*	£240.00
OB	Llanfwrog CIC	Grass cutting services – September 2021		£369.84

OB	Cllr Menna E Jones	Reimbursement for costs of purchasing new licensed premises floral display trophy	*	£154.99
OB	Cllr Menna E Jones	Reimbursement for engraving costs for business premises floral display trophy and bench memorial		£40.00
OB	Marian Rees	Translation Service for 7 and 21 June 2021	*	£90.00
OB	Planhigion Glyndwr	Plant and supply 66 planters	*	£2,772.00
OB	Hill & Roberts	Accountancy and Payroll Services for September 2021	*	£240.00

(The items marked with an \* above include recoverable V.A.T.)

From Ruthin Town Council Old Courthouse account:

OB	BT	18/07/2021 – 18/08/2021	*	£67.19
		18/08/2021 – 18/09/2021		£67.19
OB	R.I.G Joinery Ltd	Five mobile desks	*	£2,916.00
OB	MKM	Yale lock with manual deadlock	*	£41.34
OB	MKM	Sundeala sheets and cutting service	*	£62.39
OB	Cllr Gavin Harris	Reimbursement for Civic Trust Awards	*	£300.00

(The items marked with an \* above include recoverable V.A.T.)

#### 106. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

**RESOLVED:** to confirm the date of the next ordinary meeting will be Monday, 18 October 2021 at 7pm.