

CYNGOR TREF RHUTHUN RUTHIN TOWN COUNCIL



(DRAFT) Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of **RUTHIN TOWN COUNCIL**
held in a hybrid format on Monday, 19 December 2022 at 7:00pm
at The Old Courthouse and online via Zoom.

PRESENT: Councillors Menna Jones (Mayor),
Councillors Stephen Beach, Oliver Bradley-Hughes, Peter Daniels, Mike
van der Eijk, Gavin Harris, Dafydd Hughes, Ian Lewney, Anne Roberts,
Rachel Ryland, and Heather Williams
County Councillor Emrys Wynne.

IN ATTENDANCE: Siân Clark – Ruthin Town Clerk
Kate Harcus – Ruthin Deputy Town Clerk
Marian Rees – Translator

WELCOME

The Mayor warmly welcomed all attendees to the final Town Council meeting of 2022. In the lead up to Christmas the Mayor had been visiting care establishments, sheltered housing and emergency service units in the town with a gift and card. The 2023 charity calendar in support of the Mayor's Charities was currently available to purchase. On Wednesday, 21 December the Mayor would be hosting a Carol Concert at Tabernacle Chapel. The meeting was also the current Town Clerk's final meeting prior to commencing a new role with Coleg Cambria in January 2023.

152. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Christine Ellis, Jabez Redfern Oakes and Lisa Thomas and also County Councillors Bobby Feeley and Huw Hilditch-Roberts.

153. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Peter Daniels declared an interest in the following items:

'item 12 and 21 - 'Proposed Ruthin Velodrome' as a resident of Brynhyfryd Park.

154. MAYOR'S REPORT

The Mayor's report had been circulated in advance. In addition, the Mayor stated that she had been busy with foodbank activities and sincerely thanked the generosity of Ruthin residents with their contributions.

RESOLVED: *to note the content of the Mayor's Report.*

155. MEMBERS' REPORT

The Members' Report had been circulated in advance and were thanked for their activities since the last meeting.

RESOLVED: *to note the Members' Reports.*

156. RUTHIN COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT

A verbal update was provided by Cllr Emrys Wynne. It was reported that a second topographical survey had been undertaken on the Nantclwyd y Dre wall, which was now the cause of the Cuning Green's closure. A report on the survey outcome was awaited.

RESOLVED: *to note the update and to receive the outcome of the topographical survey.*

157. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Members considered the minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2022 for accuracy.

RESOLVED: *that the minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 24 November 2022 be confirmed as a correct record.*

158. MATTERS ARISING

Minute 140: 'Climate and Ecological Emergency Task Group'

- (i) It was proposed, seconded and agreed that the list of climate and ecological items be considered at the next Town Council meeting in order to define priorities and establish, as appropriate, projects and specific actions.
- (ii) Members considered the proposed mission statement defining the Town Council's commitment to the climate and ecological emergency: 'having declared a climate and ecological emergency, Ruthin Town Council will act within its powers and statutory obligations to mitigate its impact on the climate and ecology. The Town Council will work constructively with other groups, statutory bodies and the community to 'think globally, act locally' and achieve positive actions'. This mission statement was proposed, seconded and agreed.

Minute 141: Ruthin Flood Partnership – The Chairman of the Partnership, Cllr Wynne, reported that there had been an intention to convene a community meeting to establish and focus on the development of a community flood plan and whilst it had been hoped this would be held prior to Christmas, this would now be convened early in 2023.

RESOLVED: *that*

- (i) the list of climate and ecological items be considered at the next Town Council meeting in order to define priorities and establish, as appropriate, projects and specific actions.
- (ii) the following mission statement be adopted by the Town Council: '*having declared a climate and ecological emergency, Ruthin Town Council will act within its powers and statutory obligations to mitigate its impact on the climate and ecology. The Town Council will work constructively with other groups, statutory bodies and the community to 'think globally, act locally' and achieve positive actions'.*

159. MINUTES OF THE AMENITIES COMMITTEE

Members considered the minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2022 and noted the rescheduled date of the next meeting as Monday, 16 January 2023.

RESOLVED: *to receive the minutes of the Amenities Committee held on 5 December 2022 and note the rescheduled date of the next meeting as 16 January 2023.*

160. MINUTES OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Members considered the minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2022 and noted the rescheduled date of the next meeting as Monday, 16 January 2023.

RESOLVED: *to receive the minutes of the Planning and Development Committee held on 5 December 2022 and note the rescheduled date of the next meeting as 16 January 2023.*

161. MINUTES OF THE OLD COURTHOUSE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Members considered the minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2022. It was noted that the report on a proposed application for an alcohol licence for The Old Courthouse had been deferred to early 2023.

RESOLVED: *to receive the minutes of the Old Courthouse Management Committee held on 6 December 2022.*

162. CAE DDOL

Following concerns by Town Councillors, County Councillor Emrys Wynne provided an overview of the installation of replacement exercise equipment provided by Denbighshire County Council in Cae Ddol following allocation of funds. The new equipment replaced perished apparatus and was of an improved standard. Local County Council Members had been consulted and agreed on the installation subject to the agreement of the Conservation Officer, which had been received. It had been confirmed that a large oak tree was over 10 meters from the equipment. The equipment had been praised and enjoyed by residents.

Dismay was expressed by Town Councillors that new replacement play/exercise equipment had been installed in Cae Ddol by Denbighshire County Council without consultation with the Town Council. Whilst not being critical of the principle of replacing equipment, it was disappointing that, given the imminent announcement of the Levelling Up bid, which included a project focussing on a comprehensive, transformational and holistic approach to Cae Ddol (as part of the wider Parc Clwyd project), such works had been undertaken in isolation. The work to inform the Cae Ddol Levelling Up bid included feedback from residents and the wider community and the siting of the new replacement play/exercise equipment in what had been identified as a walking and cycling desire line was frustrating. Such a hap-hazard approach did not support the coherent and wider strategic vision for Cae Ddol. Members were reminded that the Town Council had not supported the Denbighshire County Council bid in March 2022 for receipt of commuted sums for Cae Ddol given the comprehensive submission to the Levelling Up bid and the need for a coherent approach.

The importance of Cae Ddol to the residents and visitors of Ruthin was emphasised and that the Town Council had provided significant investment for the skate park and lake improvements in recent years. Whilst welcoming the availability of monies for Cae Ddol, Town Councillors stated that the decision to spend on equipment which may, depending on professional advice, need to be removed to meet the ambitions of the wider Cae Ddol project, was shortsighted. An element of the project was undertake a professional assessment of Cae Ddol as an amenity to determine how best to serve and support the different needs of its users and spaces.

Councillor Emrys Wynne also advised that: some benches in Cae Ddol would be removed to avoid unintended intrusion; that picnic benches would be anchored to set locations; and that the pirate ship would be improved and repaired.

Town Councillors agreed that a letter be sent to Denbighshire County Council seeking an apology and expressing disappointment on the lack of courtesy, engagement, consultation and communication with the Town Council on the installation of the new replacement exercise equipment within Cae Ddol, and the apparent disregard to the comprehensive work and strategic approach taken by the Town Council to inform the Cae Ddol Levelling Up bid.

RESOLVED: *that a letter be sent to Denbighshire County Council seeking an apology and expressing disappointment on the lack of courtesy, engagement, consultation and communication with the Town Council on the installation of the new replacement exercise equipment within Cae Ddol, and the apparent disregard to the comprehensive work and strategic approach taken by the Town Council to inform the Cae Ddol Levelling Up bid.*

163. PROPOSED RUTHIN VELODROME

An update on the most recent meeting of the North Wales Outdoor Velodrome Project Management Board had been circulated in advance. Cllr Gavin Harris, the Town Council's representative on the Board advised Members that detailed cost plans and imagery were being prepared leading to a stakeholder, residents and community consultation process during January 2023. It was proposed, seconded and agreed that The Old Courthouse be offered to host a consultation exhibition on the Proposed Ruthin Velodrome in January 2023.

RESOLVED: *to note the update and to offer to host a consultation exhibition on the Proposed Ruthin velodrome in January 2023.*

164. A494 RUTHIN TO CORWEN ROAD

Members noted that a response had been received from the Welsh Government's Climate Change and Rural Affairs Group on concerns raised by the Town Council in its correspondence of 14 October 2022; the response has been circulated in advance. The response stated that the report and recommendations of the Roads Review Panel were being considered by the Welsh Government and the outcome published once a decision had been reached. Given that a formal petition campaign seeking improvements to the A494 Ruthin to Corwen Road had been created on the website of Darren Millar AS, the public would be encouraged to respond through that website to enable a single focus of feedback.

RESOLVED: *the response received from the Welsh Government's Climate Change and Rural Affairs Group was noted.*

165. RENEWAL OF SOCIETY OF LOCAL COUNCIL CLERKS (SLCC) MEMBERSHIP

Consideration was given by Members to renewal of the Clerk's membership of the above society for 2023. The Clerk stated that a generic membership of the SLCC would be possible in the interim prior to the commencement of a new Town Clerk.

RESOLVED: *members agreed to renew the Clerk's membership of the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC).*

166. RENEWAL OF INSURANCE COVER

Members considered the renewal of the Town Council's insurance cover with Zurich for the fourth year of a five-year agreement at a cost of £4,540.28, details of which had been previously circulated. The addition of the town's new fingerposts was requested (to the value of approximately £9,500).

RESOLVED: *to agree to the renewal of the Town Council's insurance cover with Zurich for the fourth of a five-year agreement with the cost to include the addition of cover for the town's new fingerposts.*

167. FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Members considered the financial statement for the period ending 30 November 2022.

RESOLVED: *to receive and approve the financial statement for the period ending 30 November 2022.*

168. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

RESOLVED: *that payment of the following items be approved.*

OB	Hill & Roberts	Payroll and Accountancy Services December 22	*	£240.00
OB	Sandra Williams	Translation services for Meeting on 28/11/22	*	£90.00
OB	J&C Brimble	Watering of Planters - final invoice		£1,584.00
OB	Fineline	Mayor's Christmas Cards (50)	*	£74.25
OB	Dell Technologies	IT Equipment (2x: laptops, docking stations,	*	£1,895.22

		keyboard/mouse, monitors		
OB	Denbighshire County Council	Local Government Election 2022 Costs		£100.00
				£50.79
OB	Broxap	Set of 4 extension legs and postage	*	£40.80
OB	KMT Electrical	Install and dismantle Christmas tree lights	*	£1,158.00
OB	KMT Electrical	Supply of new LED lights for Christmas Tree	*	£981.59
DD	Public Works Loan Board	Biannual Loan Repayment (DD on 28/12/2022)		£3,515.42
OB	BT	Costs of phone and internet – December 2022	*	£99.68
OB	Sian Clark	Re-imburement: Microsoft 365 December 2022	*	£18.96
OB	Kate Harcus	Re-imburement: Sundries inc cleaning equipment	*	40.79
		From the Old Courthouse account		
OB	Viking	Heavy Duty Vacuum Cleaner and dust bags	*	£161.99
OB	Total Energies	Energy Charges - Gas	*	£130.03

*(Items marked with * above include recoverable VAT)*

Also: - a refund to the National Heritage Memorial Fund of £3,144.00 of the original £6,700 grant funding received (note: Ruthin Town Council meeting - January 2021).

169. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED: To confirm the date of the next meeting of the Town Council on Monday, 23 January 2022 at 7.00pm.

170. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Chairman proposed, and it was seconded, that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the discussion on the following item as it was likely that exempt information would be disclosed, as defined in Part 4, Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972 (as outlined in paragraph 1: Information relating to any individual) and [as outlined in paragraph 3: Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)].

171. RECRUITMENT TO TOWN CLERK POST

The Chairman of the HR Sub-Committee, advised Members of the shortlisting and interview process for the appointment of a Town Clerk. Interviews were held on Friday, 16 December. The HR Sub Committee recommended the appointment of Mr Iolo Clwyd Williams as Ruthin Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer, subject to receipt of acceptable references.

RESOLVED: that,

- (i) subject to receipt of acceptable reference, that Mr Iolo Clwyd Williams be appointed to the role of Ruthin Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer.
- (ii) that, upon signing of the employment contract, that Mr Iolo Clwyd Williams be authorised as a signatory to the Town Council's bank accounts and online banking transactions.

172. MINUTES OF THE HR SUB COMMITTEE

The minutes of the HR Sub Committee held on 5 December 2022 were received and the recommendations therein considered by Members.

RESOLVED: to receive the minutes of the HR Sub Committee held on 5 December 2022 and agreed the following recommendations:

- (i) That the Deputy Clerk would undertake the Town Clerk role in the interim period, with the appropriate level of remuneration and support

- (ii) *That dedicated administrative support for up to 12 hours per week for a three month period on a self-employed basis to commence immediately in the New Year be pursued.*
- (iii) *the annual leave balance of the Town Clerk be paid;*
- (iv) *that defined hours accrued over and above the contracted hours of the Town Clerk be paid;*
- (v) *that defined hours accrued over and above the contracted hours of the Deputy Clerk be paid.*

173. PROPOSED RUTHIN VELODROME

Members received an update from Cllr Gavin Harris on the proposed Ruthin Velodrome and support was given to the proposal outlining the Town Council's commitment to the project.

RESOLVED: *to note the update and support the proposal outlining the Town Council's commitment to the project.*