**MOLD TOWN COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Meeting of Mold Town Council held at Mold Town Hall, Mold on Wednesday 27th May 2015.

**PRESENT:**

Councillors: Carol Heycocks (Mayor), Brian Lloyd, Chris Bithell, Bryan Grew, Phil Thomas, Anthony Parry, Andrea Mearns, Haydn Bateman, Robin Guest, Geoff Collett, Geoff Matthias, Ray Dodd, Gareth Williams, Richard Brookes and Bob Gaffey, The Clerk and Finance Officer, Town Centre Manager and Support Officer.

**ALSO PRESENT:** One member of the press.

**APOLOGIES**: Councillor Geoff Matthias and the Town Centre Manager and Support Officer.

**13. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Anthony Parry declared an interest in Agenda Item 14 regarding the Renewal of Mold Town Council Insurance Policy.

**14. MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor advised members of his recent activities:-

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| 14/05/2015 | SSAFA Clwyd AGM, Hightown Barracks, Wrexham  |
| 16/05/2015 | Pinboard Writers, evening of poetry, stories & memories. at St David's Community Hall |
| 19/05/2015 | Llys Jasmine, with Cllr. Heyocks presentation to Alzheimer's Charity |
| 19/05/2015 | Cottage Nursing Home, 3.00pm-4.00pm, opening of a new wing |
| 19/05/2015 | Parkfields AGM |
| 21/05/2015 | Beryl Powell invited to St Mary's church hall, re cancer charity. |
| 22/05/2015 | Visit to Llys Jasmine re charity event |

**15. MINUTES**

 **Resolved:** It was resolved that:

a) The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on held on 29th April 2015 be received and approved;

b) The minutes of the meeting of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 13th May 2015 be received and approved;

c) The minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 6th May 2015 be received and noted;

d) The minutes of the meeting of the Audit Sub Committee held on 18th May 2015 be received and approved.

**16. INFORMATION ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

16.1 Minute 181– Councillor Andrea Mearns asked if the pavements in the town would be made good following the Welsh Water works, as they were particularly poor at the top of the High Street near Clayton Road. The Town Clerk advised that she would make enquiries with Welsh Water.

16.2 Minute 186 – Councillor Chris Bithell asked if Cwmbran Community Council had accepted the suggested amendment to their Notice of Motion. The Clerk confirmed that Cwmbran had amended the Notice of Motion as suggested by Mold Town Council.

16.3 Minute 193 – Councillor Andrea Mearns requested that outcomes of meetings members attend are recorded within the minutes in future.

**17. REPORT OF THE TOWN CENTRE MANAGER**

The Town Clerk presented a verbal report to the Council on behalf of the Town Centre Manager.

**Mold Visitor Information Points -** These are all but ready with the manufacturers now indicating installation will be early July due to their production schedule and the delay in content being agreed and planning issues resolved. Nine VIP’s will be installed across the town.

**Water Mains replacement -** Now virtually finished across the town centre, although a couple of side streets are still being completed. Welsh Water and their contractors have done their best to mitigate against impact – however the town and its traders has seen a reduced footfall and turnover. Intending to have a marketing initiative in near future as time permits.

**Car Parking -** Members will be aware that the County Council agreed to the Town Council’s request of 50p for 3 hours and £1 all day at the various car parks as part of it’s county-wide review on charges, together with the reintroduction of nominated Short Stay only car parks in the town. We are still awaiting comment and discussion on various other related issues that were raised by MTC. We are now endeavouring to arrange a meeting of the Parking sub-group with FCC as soon as possible, however the County Council Departments are experiencing significant flux currently and this is proving difficult. One key issue trying to discover is the current size of the Mold investment fund for outstanding projects, as this will help determine which priorities can go ahead. This will be discussed and agreed within the Town Council Community Development and Regeneration Committee in due course.

**Daniel Owen Square -** Four events have now taken place and positive comment is being received about the Square and its potential for the future. Electricity cannot be used as the wiring inspection has only just been completed and awaiting certification as to safety. Lots of interest now being expressed and in discussion with FCC about the management of bookings / use of the Square. Still a number of snags to be addressed and there has been 2 or 3 issues with falls on the steps – however handrails now been installed. In discussion with Mold Alun School regarding Time Capsule and environmental projects.

**Livestock Market Survey -** Now operating on-line and Mold residents, traders and visitors encouraged to complete it – can Members promote please. Takes about 5-6 minutes and very easy to complete . Available at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/MoldLMU>

**Sainsbury’s -** Latest comment received 260515: *“We are reviewing our plans across a number of supermarket sites. Once we are in a position to do so, we will update people on our future plans.”*

**Blues and Soul Festival -** Plans progressing well and will be in position to announce headline acts in near future. Agreed to develop name to “North Wales Blues and Soul Festival” to support the marketing of the event and sponsorship appeal. A number of Councillors actively involved – we need sponsors!

**Street Scene issues -** Delay due to the transition period currently underway within Street Scene however promised that the “minor” development works on New Street car park will now start next week. Refreshing of borders etc on Bus Station also being undertaken and weeds spraying across the town to commence imminently.

**Shops and empty units -** Currently running at 6-7% vacancy rate for ground floor retail units which is about average – 18 months ago was at 8% but frequently in recent years 5% or less. Many towns still have 12-15% vacancy rates if not higher.
Number of commercial premises under transfer / redevelopment e.g. Hairdressers in New Street, former Meet n’ Eat to become disability aids shop, former Hammersley’s going through legal’s currently for new tenant. Biggest problem still is Daniel Owen Precinct which has higher rents, hence higher business rates PLUS service charges on top. Town suffers with insufficient number of retail units of the right size for regional / national players but we are still receiving enquiries about availability of units.
Pleased that Welsh Government have continued with Business Rates Relief Scheme which has seen threshold available to £1500.00 from the £1000.00 previous years.

**Mold Business Forum -** Having showcase event for local business at premises of Delyn Safety on Bromfield Industrial Estate to take place between 5pm & 7.30pm on Thursday 4th June 2015. Helpful if a few members were able to attend – particularly County Council members encouraged to attend.

**Resolved:** It was resolved to note the report.

**18. AUDIT SUB COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Council considered the recommendations from the meeting of the Audit Sub Committee held on 19th May 2014 relating to the report of the Internal Auditor, the Annual Return and the Statement of Assurances. Members also confirmed that they had no current links with UHY Hacker Young, the company undertaking the external audit.

The Council noted the requirement for accounts to be audited each year following a review by an internal auditor. The recommendations of the internal auditor were considered and it was agreed that the automatic limit of £3,000 on the Community Bank Account be removed. Members also noted the observation that future costs relating to contractor work at the Cemetery should in future be allocated to other expenditure and not to salaries.

The Council considered and approved the draft Annual Return, supplemented by a Schedule of Assurances linked to financial and operational matters and known as the intermediate audit, to allow the external audit to proceed.

**Resolved:** It was resolved that:

1. The recommendations of the Audit Sub-Committee in relation to the report of the Internal Auditor and the draft annual return and statement of assurances be approved.

**19. REVISED GUIDANCE ON THE CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Council considered the previously circulated correspondence received from the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales advising on the issue of a revised Guidance of the Code of Conduct.

**Resolved:** It was resolved to note the revised guidance.

**20. ACCESS TO INFORMATION ON COMMUNITY AND TOWN COUNCILS**

The Council considered the previously circulated information relating to the Local Government (Democracy ) (Wales) Act 2013 which came into force on 1st May 2015 resulting in a number of requirements by Community & Town Councils relating to publishing of information electronically. The Clerk advised that the Town Council already published much of the information electronically, but the main areas where the Town Council will have to publish in future will be to publish the political affiliation of its members and to publish the register of members interests.

**Resolved:** It was resolved to note the new requirements on the Town Council to publish information electronically.

**21. NOTIFICATION OF PLANNING DECISIONS**

 **Resolved:** It was resolved to note the report.

**22. MEETINGS ATTENDED**

Councillor Andrea Mearns introduced xxxxx from Japan who was currently studying in Geography and Environment in Oxford. She is looking at the benefits of Cittaslow and how they can be transferable to Japan. She will be visiting Mold again in September where she will be carrying out some field work.

Councillor Andrea Mearns thank the Town Council on behalf of the Daniel Owen Festival committee for the continued financial support, and sought help from members on the committee.

Councillor Andrea Mearns thanked the Town Council on behalf of Parkfields for the continued financial support for the bubblegum group and again sought additional support from members on behalf of the Committee.

Councillor Bryan Grew advised members that the Carnival and Blues & Soul Festivals would need volunteers during the event and he would be arranging for a form to be sent around for members to indicate their availability.

Councillor Bryan Grew advised that he and the Clerk had attended the recent Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) and One Voice Wales (OVW) conference where Leighton Andrews had given a speech advising that nothing significant would happen on the Reforming Local Government White Paper before the elections. Councillor Grew also advised that the OVW conference was in July and he and the Clerk would be attending, and other members are welcome to attend.

Councillor Anthony Parry congratulated everyone involved in the recent VE day celebrations on the Daniel Owen Square, advising it had been a big success. In response Councillor Robin Guest suggested a similar event should be arranged to recognise VJ Day in August. It was agreed that the Town Council will look to arrange a similar event.

**23. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

**Resolved:** It was resolved to exclude the public and press from the meeting in order to allow discussion on confidential matters.

**24. PHOTOCOPIER CONTRACT**

The Council considered proposals for the renewal of the Town Council photocopier contract. It was agreed to renew the existing contract with Canda Copying and obtain a colour photocopier.

**Resolved:** It was resolved that:

a) A new contract would be agreed with Canda Copying for a colour photocopier over a 5 year contract.

**25. MOLD TOWN COUNCIL INSURANCE POLICY RENEWAL**

The Council considered the recommendations of the Audit Sub Committee held on 18th May 2015 for the renewal of the Council’s insurance Policy.

**Resolved:** It was resolved that:

1. The recommendations of the Audit Sub-Committee in relation to the renewal of the Town Council Insurance be approved;
2. AON Insurance would be instructed to provide the insurance for the Town Council over a 3 year period as per the quote provided.

**26. ACCOUNTS / PAYMENTS**

The Council considered the schedule previously circulated and noted that expenditure complied with the statutory powers available to local councils.

**Resolved:** It was resolved that the schedule of payments be approved.

**The Meeting ended at 7.50pm**

**SUMMARY OF DECLARATIONS MADE BY MEMBERS**

**IN ACCORDANCE WITH MOLD TOWN COUNCIL’S**

**CODE OF CONDUCT**

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| **MOLD TOWN COUNCIL** | **DATE: 27th May 2015** |

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| **MEMBER** | **ITEM** | **MINUTE NO. REFERS** |
| Cllr. Anthony Parry | Agenda item 14. Mold Town Council Insurance Policy | 25 |

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