**MOLD TOWN COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Special Meeting of Mold Town Council held at Mold Town Hall, Mold on Monday 1st June 2015.

**PRESENT:**

Councillors: Brian Lloyd (Mayor), Anthony Parry, Carol Heycocks, Bryan Grew, Phil Thomas, Andrea Mearns, Robin Guest, Geoff Collett, Ray Dodd and Bob Gaffey, The Clerk and Finance Officer and Support Officer.

**APOLOGIES**: Councillor Geoff Matthias, Chris Bithell, Haydn Bateman, Gareth Williams, Richard Brookes and Karen Hodgkinson.

**27. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest expressed.

**28. MOLD TOWN PLAN**

The Town Clerk updated members advising that there is currently an agreed working group established to work with Flintshire County Council and the appointed consultant Anthony Benson of Allies and Morrison Urban Practitioners to develop the Mold Town Plan. As the Mold Town Plan will manage, moderate and steer growth of Mold within the Local Development Plan (LDP), it is important that the Town Council and the working group have a clear mandate on the content of the Town Plan.

Members were asked to consider and agree the key issues to be covered in the Town Plan and revisit the responses provided by the Town Council on the Candidate Sites in May 2014.

The Town Clerk advised that she had spoken with Anthony Benson and he has put forward suggestions for key themes for discussion and amendment.

a) Supporting and promoting the town centre economy:-

* future of the livestock market
* improving the street market
* future of County Hall site
* festivals and events programme

b) Open spaces and routes:-

* priority cycle routes
* open space improvements

c) Strategic and community assets:-

* list of sites and assets to be highlighted

c) Strategic housing growth:-

* corridor options (NE, NW, SW, S, SW ie. the key corridors in/out of Mold town centre)
* community infrastructure issues

Members discussed the key themes and the content of the consultation leaflet and put forward a number of suggestions and amendments for the Town Clerk to take forward with Anthony Benson.

Councillor Mearns asked the Town Clerk to obtain an update from Anthony Benson from previous meetings and discussions.

Councillor Mearns suggested two new headings should be included; Community Cohesion and Heritage, which members believed warranted a separate heading, but if they did not become key themes then it was important to ensure that they were recognised within the document.

Members did not think Mold street market was an issue and did not need to be discussed further.

Councillor Mearns suggested that there should be an emphasis on accommodation about retail premises to support the vibrancy of the town.

Councillor Thomas emphasised the role of the Mold Town Plan in maintaining and extending the rights of way in and around the town, and in identifying, promoting, enhancing and linking green areas to the proposed Green Band around Mold. Consideration should be given to pedestrians and cyclists wishing to access open spaces in the town, including traffic calming measures where the need arises.

Councillor Thomas highlighted the value to the local community of Candidate site MOL019, Penybont Farm, Chester Road, Mold, and the role it could play as part of the Green Band. Residents make significant use of the area, particularly for dog walking, and they have expressed an interest in acquiring the woodland area in the South East corner of the site for community use. Interest has also been expressed by volunteers in seeking to designate some of the existing pathways as public footpaths. These could potentially provide important links to the Queen’s Head in Chester Road (subject to safety considerations being addressed) and to Gas Lane/Tyddyn Street, which has recently been established as a wild flower site.

Councillor Thomas also highlighted the importance of Maes Gwern, which forms the southern boundary of the proposed Green Band. It is heavily used by dog walkers, cyclists and schoolchildren and is a crucial link on the Green Band. Access to Maes Gwern is currently blocked to these users while it is used by vehicles in support of the housing development at Upper Bryn Coch. Discussions have taken place about creating a Right of Way through Maes Gwern, and these are on-going

Councillor Thomas said that there are encouraging signs that developers are recognising their responsibilities to minimise the impact that new developments can have on habitats and wildlife. He suggested that potential developers should be required to include proposals to enhance the biodiversity and open spaces in new developments – and these need to be protected from later infill. Links should also be provided to other open spaces to ensure that the development is fully accessible to other users and fits with the concept of the Green Band

Councillor Thomas acknowledged the important role carried out by Troedio Clwyd and Ramblers volunteers, and suggested that they should be fully consulted on all Rights of Way issues affecting the town

Councillor Thomas also asked for volunteer groups such as the Ramblers, Troedio Clwyd and others to be consulted when discussing transport links.

Councillor Guest suggested consideration should be given on the impact on the town should Flintshire County Council headquarters move from Mold.

Councillor Mearns suggested hotel accommodation within the town to improve tourism and footfall and suggestions of potential sites should be included.

Councillor Mearns suggested Kendrick’s Field be included in the plan under the Festivals and Events heading.

Councillor Collett raised concerns regarding over developing new builds / housing within the town and requested the town council suggest a percentage of growth to be undertaken. Members agreed to suggest a limit of 10% growth be put forward, to allow for natural growth but not over development. Residential homes within the town (ie above business properties) should also be included within this figure. Members agreed it would be difficult to support housing growth in a particular zone as suggested by Anthony Benson, as they had already submitted candidate sites to Flintshire County Council during the consultation period in May 2014 for housing development which covered a number of areas across the town. Members agreed that they would not want overdevelopment in any particular area of the town.

Councillor Guest said Brownfield sites should be considered for opportunities for commercial sites and public facilities (community infrastructure) as well as residential developments.

Councillor Mearns said new sites need to reflect the landscapes they are built in ie: retaining hedgerows and trees, creating new green paths and corridors for people and wildlife, planting new productive trees, having community growing areas/seating areas. Also energy efficiency should be a key consideration for all new builds.

Councillor Mearns asked whether the Town Plan leaflet will be used as an overview but then guide people to a website where further information will be available. The Town Clerk confirmed that she would check with Anthony Benson as to where and how the information will be available to the public.

Members also viewed the collection of Candidate Sites within the register for Mold which had been submitted overall (not only from Mold Town Council but also from members of public, businesses, land owners etc).

The Candidate Site register did not differ from the sites which Mold Town Council had previously discussed and submitted back in May 2014. However, the register did not show details of how many housing units should be developed on each site, as the Town Council had only submitted limited developments on each of the sites on the register. The Town Clerk was asked to contact Andy Roberts at Flintshire County Council to confirm if the details submitted for each site will be taken into consideration or whether members needed to amend the site plans to show the areas they support being developed.

Members considered and discussed the key stages for the development of the Town Plan.

Councillor Mearns suggested the key stages should include time lines for each stage. The plan for public consultation should also include a public meeting as having a market information stall had proven in the past, not to be the best method of communication.

**Resolved:** It was resolved that The Town Clerk would submit the recommendations and comments made by members to Anthony Benson in relation to:-

a) The key themes for the Town Plan and the content of the consultation leaflet.

b) The candidate sites within the register for Mold

c) The key stages for the development of the Town Plan

**29. MOLD STRATEGIC AND COMMUNITY ASSETS**

The Town Clerk advised members that the Expressions of Interest made by Mold Town Council on Community Assets within the Town have all been accepted. The Town Council now need to prioritise and agree which assets to take forward to Business Plan stage. A similar approach will need to be taken for the Strategic Assets within the Town. Any action progressed with the Strategic and Community Assets will feed into the Town Plan.

Members discussed the community assets which had been accepted.

Councillor Guest raised concern regarding the cost of maintenance and replacement equipment for the play areas. The Town Clerk suggested as part of the consultation that footfall of the play areas is considered. Councillor Mearns said even if the area was not equipped, there were still benefits of having green areas within residential areas as they provided safe environment for children to play. The Town Clerk informed members that residents would be included in the consultations as there may be an increase in resident’s precept to take on certain assets.

Councillor Mearns said that within the business plan income generation streams should be included and asked the Town Clerk to obtain figures from markets and car parking as potential revenue streams.

Following members discussion, four assets were agreed upon to be taken to the next stage, Business Plan.

* New Street Public Conveniences
* All playing fields
* All play areas
* Bailey Hill, inner bailey

Members discussed the strategic assets and Councillor Mearns asked for the Old Courthouse and Police Station to be included.

Flintshire County Council had offered a 27 year lease on the Town Hall, Councillor Grew said that the Town Council should go back and ask for a longer lease and suggested a 99 year lease. Councillor Mearns mentioned that in previous discussions with Ian Bancroft it had been commented that 27 years was the maximum that would be given and it was unlikely that Flintshire County Council would increase the term of the lease. Councillor Parry suggested we ask for freehold on the Town Hall.

It was agreed by all that the Town Clerk take forward the Town Hall to the next stage.

The Town Clerk would now contact Flintshire County Council to advise them of the decisions made and arrange further meetings with Ian Bancroft, Clare Budden and the relevant service area officers to discuss the next steps and obtain the detailed information on the Community and Strategic Assets identified so as to commence consultation with the residents of Mold.

**Resolved:** It was resolved that:

a) Four community assets would be taken forward to the next stage:

* New Street Public Conveniences
* All playing fields
* All play areas
* Bailey Hill, inner bailey

b) The Town Hall would be the one strategic asset taken forward to the next stage.

c) The Clerk would contact Flintshire to arrange meetings with the relevant officers to discuss the next steps and obtain the detailed information on the Assets identified.

**The Meeting ended at 8.40pm**

**SUMMARY OF DECLARATIONS MADE BY MEMBERS**

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

**CODE OF CONDUCT**

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| **MOLD TOWN COUNCIL** | **DATE: 1st June 2015** |

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| **MEMBER** | **ITEM** | **MINUTE NO. REFERS** |
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