

MOLD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Mold Town Council held virtually on-line over video conferencing 6pm Wednesday 27th January 2021.

PRESENT:

Councillors: Teresa Carberry (Mayor), Sarah Taylor (Deputy Mayor), Trevor Arnold, Haydn Bateman, Chris Bithell, Geoff Collett, Bryan Grew, Robin Guest, Karen Hodgkinson, Haydn Jones, Brian Lloyd, Andrea Mearns, Tim Maunders, Anthony Parry and Gareth Williams.

Officers: Ian Jones Town Clerk and Finance Officer, Jane Evans Events and Community Engagement Officer, Jo Douglass Business and Regeneration Officer.

Visitors: from Flintshire County Council; Niall Waller Service Manager Enterprise and Regeneration, and Mike Eastwood Technical Officer, Streetscene.

92. APOLOGIES: None

ABSENT: Councillor Geoff Matthias

The Town Clerk advised Members that Councillor Geoff Matthias had failed to attend any Council meeting for several months and although rules had initially been relaxed during the Spring of 2020 the Town Clerk reminded Members of the disqualification rule of six months and a decision was needed in respect of Councillor Matthias. Following discussion Members agreed to grant a three-month extension to the disqualification rule due to the current pandemic.

RESOLVED: That Councillor Matthias be given a dispensation on the six-month rule to enable him to attend a meeting up to and including the April 2021 Council meeting.

93. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Chris Bithell, Karen Hodgkinson, Tim Maunders, and Gareth Williams, declared an interest in Agenda Item 9 regarding an application of Funding for the Community Shop processed through the Daniel Owen Association.

Councillors Haydn Jones and Andrea Mearns also declared an interest in Agenda item 9 regarding any potential donations to the Community Fridge Project at Parkfields.

The Mayor therefore, with the consent of the Council, requested and ruled that this item be moved to the end of the agenda and taken after completion of the other items of substantive business in order that those Members who had a conflict of interest could alight themselves from the meeting at that stage if they felt fit to do so.

94. MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor requested a one-minute silence to mark the Holocaust Memorial Day.

The Mayor gave Members an update on her official engagements attended since the last meetings and also expressed her thanks to:

Councillors Andrea Mearns and Haydn Jones for their work on the Parkfields Community Centre.

Councillor Karen Hodgkinson, Gareth Williams, and Geoff Matthias for their work in re-opening the Community Shop.

Officers of the Town Council in staffing the Totally Mold pop up Shop and Members who had volunteered to promote the Totally Mold Vouchers in the Town.

95. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That:

- a) The Minutes of the Council meeting held on 25th November 2020 be received and formally approved; and
- b) The Minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on 17th December 2020 and 18th January 2021 be received and noted.

Councillor Tim Maunders joined the meeting at 6.15pm

96. HIGH STREET MOLD IMPROVEMENTS – PUBLIC CONSULTATION.

The Mayor welcomed Niall Waller Service Manager Enterprise and Regeneration, Flintshire County Council. Niall Waller provided Members with an overview and context of the proposed Mold High Street Improvement scheme, which was currently open to Public Consultation, with a closing date of Friday 29th January 2021. Niall updated Members on events since the last meeting that funding through Welsh Government 'Active Travel' had been secured and County Members as well as some Town Councillors had been in attendance when a Sub-Group met to discuss the detailed options available.

Niall was asked if the funding could be used for alternative uses as feedback received was that this funding could be put to better use in the Town such as improving the Bus Services and enhancements to the Car Parks.

Niall clarified that the funding was Capital only and that it could only be spent on 'Active Travel' hence the improvements for cycling and walking as part of the scheme. Niall also reiterated that any scheme would also first have to pass a traffic safety audit.

Members discussed concerns and merits of the scheme. It was suggested that this item should be deferred to the next meeting to allow for an opportunity to review the feedback from the Consultation process.

There was also a counter proposal that a decision be taken on the Town Council's view to inform the Flintshire County Council Consultation process. The counter proposal was lost upon being put to a vote.

RESOLVED: that a decision on the Town Council's viewpoint be deferred, until the next meeting or even a special meeting to provide an opportunity to review and digest the results of the consultation first.

Niall Waller left the meeting at 7pm

97. MOLD BUS STATION IMPROVEMENTS.

The Mayor welcomed Mike Eastwood Technical Officer, Streetscene, Flintshire County Council. Mike clarified that all Members had received the revised plans which had been sent out over email earlier and asked for any feedback.

Councillor Trevor Arnold who had attended a previous site visit as part of the Sub-Group sought clarification for the requirement of baby changing facilities in both the male and female toilets. Mike responded that within the current footprint of the building it was not possible to include such facilities.

Councillor Andrea Mearns asked if it was possible to include the baby changing facilities within the disabled toilet. Mike explained that the current size of the disabled toilet did not meet the minimum size required to be classified as a disabled toilet and so alterations would be required. He would make an enquiry with the architect to see if it was possible to include provision for a drop down baby changing table.

Councillor Gareth Williams asked if there would be a charge to use the new facilities and Mike responded by informing Members that a decision was made by the Sub-Group to ensure that the facilities would remain a free to use.

Councillor Chris Bithell asked about the timescales for the refurbishment and Mike confirmed that subject to the amendments in the drawings been approved then work could start on site on 15th March 2021 with an expected completion by 19th April 2021.

RESOLVED: that

- a) a drop down baby changing facility be incorporated into the design of the disabled toilet if possible; and
- b) a site meeting of the Sub-Group be held as soon as possible to review and confirm plans. (Mike to send the Town Clerk some suggested dates).

Mike Eastwood left the meeting at 7.15pm

98. JOINT REPORT OF THE BUSINESS & REGENERATION OFFICER AND EVENTS & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OFFICER

Members considered the previously circulated report from the Business & Regeneration Officer and Events & Community Engagement Officer.

The Events and Community Engagement Officer highlighted the email from Adam Phillips of Cambria band and the request to have street mural following the success of the Mold Riots production and for Members support with the request and any assistance in liaising with Property owners to obtain permission.

The Business and Regeneration Officer clarified that the recent approved planning application for the lower level of the Co-op for café use and sub-division was from a previously interest party but they had withdrawn their interest in the building as a result of the pandemic but had not withdrawn their planning application. The site was now leased by Mere Supermarket.

RESOLVED: that;

- a) Support be given to the suggestion of street mural on the Mold Riots;
- b) Members to email suggested sites and assistance in gaining property owners permission: and
- c) the report be received and noted.

99. BUDGET 2021/22

Members considered the previously circulated budget report detailing the estimates for the current year, the probable expenditure for the year together with estimates for the next financial year 2021/22. Members noted that the report included the third quarterly review of the current year's accounts with details of the petty cash expenditure, income and the bank / cash reconciliation as at 31st December 2020.

The Town Clerk reminded Members that the Budget Sub-Group has monitored the expenditure and carefully considered the detail of the proposed budget.

The Budget Sub Group had recognised that there was likely to be a significant rise in Council Tax by Flintshire County Council and questioned whether there was a need for an increase in the precept for the Town Council given the likely public sector pay freeze, reduced budget pressure in some areas, also that the economy was under severe strain and there was hardship being experienced.

The Budget Sub Group considered that the draft budget was sensible, prudent and not too ambitious given current conditions, it therefore concluded that no increase in the precept would be the best outcome this year.

Following a question by Councillor Andrea Mearns the Town Clerk agreed to ring fence any profit from the Bailey Hill Festival, when it was likely to get the go-ahead next time.

Members considered Appendix 7 and Earmarked reserves (EMR) in relation to alternative delivery models and any future rent/purchase. It was suggested that a review of the EMR should take place during the year with a particular focus on the future property requirements of the Town Council – Review of the Town Hall and a look at funds held for the alternative delivery model.

Councillor Robin Guest left meeting at 7.40pm

RESOLVED: that;

- a) The quarterly review of general expenditure, petty cash expenditure, income and the bank reconciliation as at 31st December 2020 be noted and approved;
- b) Approve the Budget for 2021/2022, noting that regular reviews will be undertaken;
- c) A precept of £278,683.00 be approved for the year 2021/2022 which reflects no percentage increase; and
- d) A Budget sub group meeting would be held later on in the year to review the Earmarked reserves.

100. ANNUAL RETURN & EXTERNAL AUDIT 2019/2020

The Town Clerk reported that the External Audit had now been completed of the Town Council's accounts for the year 2019/2020 due to a delay caused by the pandemic. On the basis of its review, in its opinion, the information contained in the Annual Return is in accordance with the proper practices and no matters have come to its attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. The report pointed to the Internal Auditor's report which had previously been received and agreed by the Town Council and two procedural errors in the paperwork relating to the Trust fund response and Minute reference number.

It was noted that BDO the current external auditor would be replaced next year by the Welsh Audit Office who would be undertaking all audits within Wales Town and Community Councils.

RESOLVED: to receive and note the information contained within the Auditor's report.

101. NOTIFICATION OF PLANNING DECISIONS

Members considered the previously circulated information regarding Planning decisions.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

102. CORRESPONDENCE ITEMS.

Members considered the previously circulated letter of reply from Steve Jones, Head of Streetscene and Transportation at Flintshire County Council in response Councillor Geoff Collett's formal letter as Chair of the Community Development and Regeneration Committee regarding flower beds, bus station cleaning and uncontrolled dogs within the ornamental gardens.

RESOLVED: that the letter response be received and noted.

103. MEETINGS ATTENDED

Members considered the previously circulated report from Councillor Andrea Mearns.

Councillor Mearns informed Members that she was particularly disappointed that Bws Benthg / Borrow Bus - mobile Library of Things project as led by Llangollen Town Council (with Mold and Ruthin Town Councils as partners) was not progressing due to the associated financial risks with the project in not obtaining a suitable electric vehicle. However, she wanted to thank Members and the Town Clerk who had helped with the scheme to this point.

Councillor Mearns also reported good progress with Mold Town Council's own scheme – the Naked Takeaway, and good news regarding more tree planting in Mold. She also updated on matters relating to Woodlands for Water scheme and the Parkfields Community Fridge project for communities in need.

RESOLVED: The report be received and noted.

104. ACCOUNTS / PAYMENTS

The Council considered the schedules previously circulated.

Month 8 Community Bank account CB1 £27,388.41

Month 9 Community Bank account CB1 £31,110.45

RESOLVED: that the schedule of payments be approved.

105. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The Mayor reported that the Financial Assistance Panel Members had received copies of applications from the Town Clerk but that none of the applications had met the criteria agreed for consideration of grant aid. Since then an application has come in from the Community Shop for £1,000 of financial support to support families in need through food parcels.

Councillors, Chris Bithell, Karen Hodgkinson, Tim Maunders and Gareth Williams left the meeting at 8pm, having declared their interests in this matter.

Councillors Haydn Jones and Andrea Mearns also declared their interests in this item but remained in the meeting.

RESOLVED: That:

- a) a donation of £1,000 be made to the Community Shop for the 'Buy it Forward' Scheme;
- b) this amount be reviewed at the next meeting if requested; and
- c) any un-used grant funding to be returned to the Town Council for re-allocation accordingly.

The Meeting closed at 8.10pm

SUMMARY OF DECLARATIONS MADE BY MEMBERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH MOLD TOWN COUNCIL'S CODE OF CONDUCT

MOLD TOWN COUNCIL		DATE: 27 January 2021
MEMBER Councillors Chris Bithell Karen Hodgkinson, Tim Maunders Andrea Mearns Haydn Jones and Gareth Williams	ITEM Agenda item 9 Financial Assistance	MINUTE NO. REFERS Minute no:105

Mayor's signature: Date:

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