

MINUTES OF HARLECH COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT THE OLD LIBRARY, HARLECH AT 7.00 P.M. ON 03.03.25

APOLOGIES

Cllr. James Maxwell (Vice Chairman), Reg Chapman, Ceri Griffiths, Wendy Williams.

PRESENT

Cllrs. Christopher Braithwaite (Chairman), Edwina Evans, Rhian Corps, Gordon Howie, Mark Lewis, Simon Turner, Martin Hughes, and Cllr. Annwen Hughes and Gwynfor Owen (Gwynedd Council).

There were 8 members of the public present at the meeting

The Chairman explained that he had called the meeting for 7.00 p.m. so that members of the public could have time to question the Council on various matters and that the official meeting of the Council would start at 7.10 pm. The Chairman also stated that this would continue every month.

Various questions were asked by some members of the public regarding the meeting that had taken on the 19th of last month and it was explained that this meeting had been arranged by the HAL Board members and not the Harlech Community Council.

A question was asked about the latest situation regarding the Community Council's website and it was stated that hopefully this would be live by the end of this month and the necessary documents will be uploaded first with various documents to follow

CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman thanked Cllr. James Maxwell, Vice Chairman for chairing last month's meeting.

On behalf of the Council the Chairman wished Cllr. Wendy Williams a speedy recovery

On behalf of the Council the Chairman wished Cllr. Edwina Evans a belated happy 90th birthday

The Chairman stated that he had attended the meeting arranged by the HAL Board members.

MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on February 3rd 2025 were found to be correct.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising from the minutes

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Cllr. Edwina Evans declared an interest regarding the letter from Teulu Castell and she signed a personal Declaration of Interest form and she did not take part when the matter was discussed.

GWYNEDD COUNCIL MATTERS

The following report was received from Cllr. Annwen Hughes and Gwynfor Owen. Cllr. Annwen Hughes reported that since the last meeting that she had visited the public toilets (ladies side) near the Queen's Hotel and was disappointed to see the state of the place as somebody had thrown rubbish and vandalised every cubicle and she had contacted the relevant department of Gwynedd Council regarding this immediately and the work of cleaning and repairing had been carried out by the next day. She also informed the Members that she will be attending a meeting with the Police in Barmouth on Friday 7th of this month and if they had any questions they wanted her to ask the Police for them to contact her before then.

Cllr. Gwynfor Owen stated that he had received a complaint that there is no seat in the bus shelter by Pen yr Hwylfa. That there were dangerous trees on the footpath near Pant Mawr, he had attended the public meeting arranged by HAL, the afternoon tea in the Memorial Hall, various meeting with the Fire Authority. He informed the Members that there will be a full Council meeting on the 6th of this month where the council tax will be discussed and agreed on for the next financial year. He also stated that he had been informed that no more recycling lorries will be coming through the town.

MATTERS ARISING

Budget Plan

It was reported that the Council had spent £68,113.96 (which included bank charges) since the start of the new financial year and this was £36,177.79 less expenditure than what was earmarked in the budget for the year (This is after the budget has been revised).

HAL Update and Resolution

Motion from Cllr. Mark Lewis

Harlech Community Council agrees to receive ownership of the Harlech Swimming Pool site and will lease all or part of the site to either Moelwyn Gymnastics or the "People's Plan" team. Harlech Community Council will choose one of these options by March 26th or will pay £12,000 on that date to HAL to clear their debt to Gwynedd Council

The above motion was withdrawn by Cllr. Mark Lewis

The following report was received from Cllr. Mark Lewis on behalf of the HAL Board Members:-

HAL / HCC Subcommittee Update - March 3rd 2025 • We held a public consultation meeting on February 19th. About 150 people attended. The public were updated on the history of HAL to date and what the HAL / HCC team has done since December. The two bidding teams presented their plans and answered questions from the public. The public were able to ask questions and provide feedback. • Both bidding teams provided their final proposals / business plans on February 21st. • On February 21st, Gwynedd Council paid off £7,500 of the £12,000 debt that HAL owes to them. The remaining £4,500 will be forgiven if one of the two community oriented options is chosen. Because GCC has removed their end of March deadline, there is no longer a hard deadline for deciding the way forwards. • We approached the two bidders again about working together to include both gymnastics and swimming facilities at the site. We were told that the two projects would have to compete for the same regionally limited grants, thus creating a situation where both projects might end up partially funded and we end up with nothing. The HAL / HCC team has given up on a joint project. • The HAL / HCC team is now evaluating the bidder's business plans and will report back to the council when we have a recommendation. • The next HAL / HCC team meeting is on March 14th after Reg and Jim return from holiday

Cllr. Simon Turner presented a draft document which covers the risk for Harlech Community Council taking over the asset.

Election of Councillor

The Clerk reported that she had been informed by the Electoral Officer that he had received a request for an election and that she had received Notice of Election from him and the nomination period is open between the 5th of this month until 4.00 p.m on the 13th of this month.

Allotments

The Clerk reported that she had been informed by Ms. Paula Ireland that meetings had been held on the above site and that five new allotments had been rented (nos. 4, 9, 11 (a), 11 (b) & 12) with four allotments remaining vacant (nos. 5, 6, 8, 10 & 15/16). She had received a further email from Ms. Ireland stating that a couple wanted to rent two allotments and that they intended to use the plots mainly as a social space, with less focus on growing. They were considering having small, carefully managed fire pits or chimineas and possibly a moon bath, so they would keep some of the larger shrubs to maintain some privacy. Ms. Ireland wanted the Council's opinion on this before renting the two allotments to them. Ms. Ireland had also held an on-site meeting with Mr. Meirion Evans regarding the construction of pathways on the site. He had provided a price of £500 for labour and machinery to build a usable path along the fence line at plot 11, allowing access to plot 12. Additionally, he would charge £100 for materials (sub-base), plus VAT. He would level the area, dig a suitably sized path, and fill it with sub-base material (six tonnes). He also offered to repair the ground damage between the allotments and the cemetery at no cost. Despite being very busy, he was willing to complete the work in March, allowing the new plot holders to start as soon as possible.

He was keen to provide a quotation for further work that may be required in the next financial year, such as constructing a path along the lower plots with a water pipe installed, as well as clearing the communal land and the area next to the potting shed. Ms. Ireland also asked whether it would be possible for those renting plots to park on the piece of land between the allotments and the cemetery. The Clerk stated that she had informed her that this would be fine as long as no one parked outside the gates, as that piece of land belonged to the nearby Chapel. The Clerk had also received an e-mail from Mrs Stephanie Evans informing the Council that she was giving up her plots. All Members agreed to receive the quote from Mr. Meirion Evans. All Members were in agreement that renting plots 15/16 for the purpose stated above was not acceptable and therefore rejected the application.

Nature trail management plan

The Clerk reported that she had asked Mr. Tom Edwards to carry out the necessary work on the trees as outlined in both reports as soon as possible. The Clerk reported further that she had been told by Mr. Tom Edwards that he would be visiting the site this week.

Penygraig Land

The Clerk reported that she had received an e-mail from Mr. Dylan Edwards, Solicitor from the firm Guthrie Jones & Jones, regarding the above matter and stating that they had received the money and was now going to carry on and get searches and they would be in contact with the Council again. The Clerk reported further that she had received another e-mail from Mr. Dylan Edwards regarding the above matter and stating they are still waiting for the searches to come back, and asking the following questions:-

1. Will you instruct a surveyor to do the following?:

- i. To ascertain whether the land is physically safe to purchase;
- ii. To make a risk assessment of the site;
- iii. To ascertain whether the property endangers neighbouring properties;
- iv. To report whether there is or will be necessary expenditure on the property in the future to keep it safe.

2. We attach a copy of TP1 which you will be asked to sign in due course. We refer specifically to the following clauses (but you should read it all carefully): 4.1.1; 4.1.2; 4.1.3; 4.1.4; and 4.1.4.

3. We understand that Harlech Council is currently leasing the property. Can we get a copy of that lease please.

4. We refer to clause 5.2 in the TP1. Do you know something about 'potentially contaminative uses'? This is an important point that can result in significant costs in the future if the property is polluted.

5. We refer to clause 5.4. Do you know of any 'Notice'?

6. The limits between this property and the property in the possession of the seller not sold to you shall be limits held jointly – clause 6.3.

7. Please confirm that no one apart from Harlech Council currently occupies or is present on the property. It was agreed to send the above e-mail to all Members.

Way Forward Committee – meeting 30.1.25 and review publication of Hanks report

The way forward committee presented progress made to date . This included timescales and recommendations, all members voted to agree the recommendations set out by the way forward committee.

Opening of Grass Cutting Tenders

The Clerk reported that she had received one tender to carry out the above work from Mr. Meirion Griffith, Islwyn Talsarnau to cut the grass on the public footpaths, Llyn y Felin playing field and the public cemetery. It was agreed to accept Mr. Meirion Griffiths tender. It was also agreed to accept the price of Mr. Gareth John Williams to cut the grass in the king George playing field and the football pitch again this year. It was agreed to accept this tender.

Members of the public were asked to leave when the above matter was discussed

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

None come to hand since the last Council meeting.

RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

The Responsible Financial Officer reported that there was £22,490.22 in the current account and £83,983.99 in the reserve account.

Invoices needing payment since last meeting

Mrs Annwen Hughes	- £882.00 - (6 months wages) + £685.60 (6 month costs) = £1,567.60
Mr. Joe Patton	- £87.55 - cost of erecting the noticeboard in King George playing field
Mr. Joe Patton	- £10.00 - reimbursement for purchasing edible plants*
Play Inspection Company	- £336.00 - inspection of King George and Llyn y Felin playing fields
Brown & Wolfe	- £480.00 - 20% deposit for creating new website for the Council
Mr. G. J. Williams	- £142.50 - cut grass in King George V playing field
One Voice Wales	- £40.00 - Councillor's training
Mr. Lee Warwick	- £256.27 - clean public toilets near the memorial hall

*The Responsible Financial Officer explained that she had received an e-mail from Mr. Joe Patton stating because he had received just over £30 from the committee of the Llanbedr Beer Festival for these plants, he was asking for only £10 repayment from the Council.

Applications for financial contributions

Harlech & Ardudwy Leisure	- £1,824.75 – precept proposal (monthly payment)
Cylch Meithrin Harlech	- £2,000.00
Friends of Ysgol Tanycastel	- £3,000.00
Old Library Committee	- £1,000.00
Memorial Hall Committee	- £1,000.00
Meirionnydd YFC	– it was agreed to send this letter to all Members and discuss it next month
Teulu Castell	– it was agreed to send this letter to all Members and discuss it next month

The above payments were processed by Cllr. Christopher Braithwaite and Cllr. Martin Hughes approved the payments and permission was granted to the Clerk/Treasurer to make payment on line or by cheque at the end of the meeting.

Monies received since last meeting

None received since the last meeting.

Invoices paid since the last meeting

Catrin Soraya Williams – £145.00 - translation services

The Responsible Financial Officer reported further that she had asked Ms Luned Fon Jones from the Finance Department, Gwynedd Council if she would be willing to act as the Council's Internal Auditor again this year and that she had agreed to this.

832.....Chairman

CORRESPONDENCE

Mrs K. Smith

Received an e-mail from the above regarding the broken fence alongside the A496 and asking what was the latest with regard to this. It was agreed to put this matter on next month's agenda and the Chairman agreed to try and contact the owner of the land.

Snowdonia National Park

Received an e-mail from the above regarding the name of the new housing estate and stating that the developer had chosen the name Maes Meillion and asking for the Council's comments regarding this name. The Clerk had already forwarded this e-mail to Members. It was agreed that the Members had no comments regarding this name.

Snowdonia National Park

Received an e-mail from the above together with guidance note on the planning system and asking the Council to take note of this when discussing planning applications. The Clerk had already forwarded this e-mail to Members.

One Voice Wales

Received an e-mail from the above regarding training dates for February and March for Council's information. The Clerk had already forwarded this e-mail to Members.

Play Inspection Company

Received the reports regarding the inspection of the two play parks that they had carried out recently. The Clerk had already forwarded this e-mail to Members.

Gwynedd Council – Highways Department

Received a letter from the above informing the Council that maintenance work will be carried out on the retaining wall near Ivy House during this month and traffic lights will be needed on site. The Clerk had already forwarded this e-mail to Members.

North Wales Police

Received an e-mail from the Wales Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) together with a copy of the Police and Crime Plan for North Wales for Council's information. The Clerk had already forwarded this e-mail to Members.

SIGNED.....Chairman

DATE..... 833.