

MINUTES OF HARLECH COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT THE OLD LIBRARY, HARLECH AT 7.00 P.M. ON 12 .05.25

APOLOGIES

Cllr. Ceri Griffiths, Tegid John, Rhian Corps and Gwynfor Owen (Gwynedd Council).

PRESENT

Cllrs. Christopher Braithwaite (Chairman), James Maxwell (Vice Chairman), Edwina Evans, Wendy Williams, Gordon Howie, Mark Lewis, Simon Turner Rhian Corps, Reg Chapman, Martin Hughes, and Cllr. Annwen Hughes and Gwynfor Owen (Gwynedd Council).

There were 3 members of the public present at the meeting

Questions by members of the public

Questions and comments were received from some members of the public.

Thanking the Council that the new website is now live but expressing disappointment that the Hanks report and Audit Wales are not on it, it was explained that the new website had just gone live and those reports will be uploaded to it soon.

It was noted by a member of the public that they had sent an email to the Clerk on the 1st of this month but had not received a reply, and it was explained that the Clerk's Council email is no longer working.

It was also noted that the Council would not be meeting on the first Monday of this month and asked if it would be possible to state the date of the next meeting at the end of each meeting.

They wanted to know what "unobstructed promotion of hyper local benefits" meant on the website and stated that this relates to the development of the second part of the website.

They queried about having public participation on the agenda and not separately, and it was explained that this was not possible as the public are not members of the Council.

They wanted to know why the Chairman is in the annual report is the same for every Council as wanting to know if the Council is going to tighten financial applications that are coming in and it was stated that the finance sub-committee is already looking at this.

Wanted to know why the Council is paying £1.20 to the Woodland Trust and it was explained that this is for signage rent at Coed Llechwedd.

At the beginning of the meeting, the Clerk stated that she had received an email from Cllr Ceri Griffiths asking if it would be possible for her to be excused from attending Council meetings for the next 6 months because she has to visit her mother who is in a nursing home on a daily basis and also due to pressure at work. This was agreed to be allowed.

CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman stated that it had been a busy month and had met up with the Clerk to go through Council matters together with many other meetings. One Councillor asked if it would be possible to sent a letter to CADW to ask why there were no flags on the castle on VE day and also why the castle does not get lit up anymore and hoping that the arrangements for VJ day will be better.

MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on April 7th 2025 were found to be correct.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising from the minutes

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Nobody declared an interest on any matter on the agenda but it was stated there was a need for everyone to complete a Councillor's Register of Interest that the Clerk had forwarded to them and return it to the Clerk so as to upload it on the website..

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 received complaints that a skip company were carrying out activities in the Min y Don car park and concerned that they were carrying large loads along the main road and she had referred these complaints to the appropriate Officers at Gwynedd Council and had been promised that they would look into this. She had been informed that the toilets near the Queens hotel had been vandalized once again. She had met with one of Gwynedd Council workers who was repairing the toilets by the Min y Don car park and had been told that these also had been vandalised and also the ones in lower Bron y Graig car park and she had asked why one cubicle was not open and this had not been open for several years and that one cubicle in the mens toilets was used as a store room. She had been informed that Officers from Gwynedd Council would visit the Bron y Graig Isaf car park and carry out any work that was needed there.

MATTERS ARISING

Election of Officers for the year 24/25:-

Chairman:- Cllr. Christopher Braithwaite

Vice Chairman:- Cllr. James Maxwell

Other Committees Members

Before discussing these committees further it was agreed to join the following and give them the following heading

Green Spaces Committee (which includes the cemetery, public footpaths, the two play parks, allotments and Bron y Graig nature trail) – Chairman, Vice Chairman and Cllrs. Reg Chapman, Tegid John, Simon Turner and Gordon Howie

Infrastructure Committee (which includes toilets, notice boards, bus shelters and public seats) Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Cllrs Rhian Corps, Mark Lewis, Wendy Williams and Martin Hughes

Council Committees

Staffing – Cllrs. Christopher Braithwaite, James Maxwell, Ceri Griffiths and Rhian Corps

Finance – Cllrs. Christopher Braithwaite, James Maxwell, Reg Chapman and Martin Hughes

Council Representatives on Outside Bodies

Memorial Hall – Cllrs. Edwina Evans and Ceri Griffiths,

Old Library – Cllrs. Edwina Evans and Martin Hughes

One Voice Wales –Chairman and Cllr. Martin Hughes

Tan y Castell School Governor – Cllr. Wendy Williams

Cllr. Reg Chapman proposed a Scrutiny Committee involving members of the public as well as Councillors be established.

Budget Plan

It was reported that the Council had spent £4,777.06 (which included bank charges) since the start of the new financial year and this was £3,400.19 less expenditure than what was earmarked in the budget for the 2025/26 year.

Council's Annual Report

The Clerk reported that she had prepared the third annual report on behalf of the Council and that she had forwarded a copy to every Member before the meeting. It was agreed to bring back this report to Council for approval once the Chairman has provided his own presentation for the beginning of the report.

Council's Website

The Clerk reported that the website is now live but things need to be added to it moving forward. It was also made known that the Clerk's Council e-mail had stopped working when transferring from one website to the other.

Nature trail management plan

The Clerk reported that Mr. Tom Edwards had contacted her to inform her that he had completed the work at the above site. Also she stated that she had been informed by the Woodlands Officer of the National Park that they had already paid half for this work to be carried out. Cllr. James Maxwell stated that he had taken down the tents that were in the paths.

Penygraig Land

The Clerk reported that she had received the names of two surveyors who would maybe be able to carry out the survey work and they were Stefan Imiolczyk from Groundsolve Ltd and the Datrys company from Caernarfon. It was agreed to ask both for a quote to carry out the surveying work,

Harlech Beach (North Section) beach cleanup

Cllr. Simon Turner stated that he was still having difficulties in finding a tractor and trailer and also he was still waiting for a reply from the golf club. The Waffle and Grace company was ready and only wanted to cover their costs.

Fence along the A496

The Clerk reported that she had asked Mr. Meirion Evans for a quote to take the fence down and that she had received a quote of £700 minus VAT from him because he stated that the posts were in concrete and a machine and grab would be needed to get the posts out and also a driver for the day and a tractor and trailer and get rid of the posts. It was agreed not to accept this quote and ask for a quote to just cut the posts down to ground level only.

HAL

The following report was received from Cllr. Mark Lewis with regards to the latest situation regarding HAL In April the HCC / HAL team continued to work with the People's Plan and Moelwyn Gymnastics bidders to refine their business plans. We met face-to-face with both teams to review. They have until the end of this week to present any new evidence.

We received written confirmation from Gwynedd Council that should HCC take ownership of the site and lease it to one of the two bidders, and then the bidder fails, HCC will be allowed to sell the site at the market price with all liens removed.

An appraisal of the site is scheduled for 23rd May.

The team plans to present their recommendation for a vote at the June HCC meeting. This recommendation will include:

- An explanation of the anticipated community benefits
- A financial model of the recommended option
- A risk assessment of the plan with mitigation
- A commercial appraisal of the site
- An estimate of the funding required from HCC to support the option
- An immediate funding request to cover transferring the asset, insurance during the transition, final accounts and shutting down HAL.

It was made known that the Chairman and Cllr. Mark Lewis had received an e-mail from Cllr. Gwynfor Owen informing them that he had organized a meeting with Gwynedd Council so as to discuss matters from their side on Friday 16th of this month at 2.15 pm. In the Old Library.

Way Forward Committee Update

The document regarding the above was shown to everyone and it showed the increase the Council is making with regards to various matters. It was agreed to place completing a new mandate, list of training courses that is available to Members and Clerk and SLCC membership on the agenda next month. It was agreed to purchase a laptop up to the value of £500 for the Clerk and permission was given for the finance sub-committee to look into this and report back to the Council.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Conversion of existing garage to habitable rooms together with the installation of a pitched slate roof and associated alterations Drws-y-Coed, Harlech (NP5/61/666A)

Support this application

Removal of existing roof and glazing and the erection of a new roof, 400mm higher than existing, together with the installation of three new dormer windows Llechwedd Du Bach, Harlech (NP5/61/377B)

Support this application

Retrospective application to retain variations made to garage/store/workshop approved under Planning Application NP5/61/531A dated 09/08/2012 Brynteg, Ffordd Isaf, Harlech (NP5/61/531B)

Support this application

RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

The Responsible Financial Officer reported that there was £50,463.10 in the current account and £84,344.85 in the reserve account.

Invoices needing payment since last meeting

One Voice Wales - £42.00 – Councillor training (Cllrs. James Maxwell)
Mr. Tom Edwards - £2,875.00 - tree work in Bron y Graig nature trail
Mr. G. J. Williams - £202.00 - cut grass in King George V playing field
Clear Insurance Ltd - £2,452.45 – Council's insurance

The above payments were processed by Cllr. Gordon Howie and Cllr. Edwina Evans 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

Ms Delyth Kerr - £40.00 – rent for allotment no. 12
Ms Melissa Morgan - £40.00 – rent for allotment nos. 17 a 18
Mrs Linda Soar - £20.00 – rent for allotment no 11 (a)
Mrs Maureen Kendrick - £25.00 – rent for allotment no 9
Mr. Tim Brooks - £20.00 – rent for allotment no 5
Mr. Gareth Jones - £20.00 – rent for allotment no 11 (b)
Mr. Dafydd Owen - £150.00 - rent for allotment nos. 1, 2 & 3
Gwynedd Council - £42,500.00 - half the precept
Customs & Excise - £374.14 – VAT repayment
Ms Paula Ireland - £30.00 – rent for allotment no 7

Invoices paid since the last meeting

Catrin Soraya Williams – £145.00 - translation services
Mr. Lee Warwick - £135.00 – cleaning of public toilets by the castle

The Responsible Financial Officer reported that she had received the External Audit Reports for 2022/23 and 2023/24 back from the External Auditor and that these had been uploaded to the website already. There were some issues in both reports that were not accurate in the opinion of the Chairman and the Responsible Financial Officer and that a report had been prepared in response to both reports that had been received. It was agreed to upload this report onto the Council's website.

CORRESPONDENCE

Ms Paula Ireland

Received an e-mail from the above with regards to the allotments and asking if it would be alright to rent an allotment to a person who lives outside the community. It was agreed not to rent an allotment to persons who live outside the community.

Teulu Castell

Received a thank you card from the above with regards to the recent donation received by the Community Council

Gwynedd Council – Economy Department

Received an e-mail from the above informing the Council that the Community Regeneration Support Fund has now opened and that grants between £10,000 and £100,000 are available.

SIGNED.....Chairman

DATE..... 843.