

MINUTES OF HARLECH COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT THE OLD LIBRARY, HARLECH AND OVER ZOOM AT 7.00 P.M. ON 11.05.26

5.1 APOLOGIES

Cllr. Gwynfor Owen (Gwynedd Council).

5.2 PRESENT

Cllrs. Christopher Braithwaite (Chairman), James Maxwell (Vice Chairman), Reg Chapman, Edwina Evans, Wendy Williams, Simon Turner, Giles Bentham, Mark Lewis, Martin Hughes, Tegid John, Cllr. Annwen Hughes (Gwynedd Council).

There was 1 member of the public present in the room and 1 member of the public present over zoom at the meeting

Questions by members of the public

There were no questions from members of the public.

5.3 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman had no announcements to make.

5.4 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on April 13th 2026 were found to be correct.

5.5 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising from the minutes

5.6 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Cllr. Reg Chapman declared an interest in the matter regarding HAL

Cllr. Martin Hughes declared an interest in the matter regarding HAL

Cllr. Simon Turner declared an interest in the matter regarding HAL

No Personal Declaration of Interest Form was signed by them as they had done this already in the last meeting of the Council and the interest in this matter is running continuously.

5.7 GWYNEDD COUNCIL MATTERS

The following report was received from Cllr. Annwen Hughes – she reported that she had received complaints that skip lorries are going down to Min y Don car park on a regular basis and that she had referred this complaint to the environment department, Gwynedd Council and also to the Police.

She had received complaints that some park along the high street all day everyday and she had referred this complaint to the Police and asking them to ask the Traffic Warden to visit the town.

5.8 MATTERS ARISING

A Election of Officers for the year 26/27:-

Chairman:- Cllr. James Maxwell

Vice Chairman:- Cllr. Tegid John

Members of Sub Committees:-

Green Spaces Committee (which includes the cemetery, public footpaths, the two play parks, allotments and Bron y Graig nature trail):- Chairman, Vice Chairman, Cllrs. Reg Chapman, Wendy Williams, Gordon Howie, Simon Turner and Giles Bentham.

Biodiversity Committee – Chairman and Cllr. Reg Chapman.

Infrastructure Committee (which includes toilets, notice boards, bus shelters, war memorial and public seats):- Chairman, Vice Chairman and Cllr. Wendy Williams.

Projects Committee – Chairman, Vice Chairman, Cllrs. Reg Chapman, Mark Lewis and Martin Hughes

Events Committee – Chairman, Vice Chairman, Cllrs. Simon Turner and Mark Lewis

Council Representatives on Outside Bodies

Memorial Hall – Cllr. Edwina Evans

Old Library – Cllrs. Edwina Evans and Martin Hughes

One Voice Wales – Chairman and Cllr. Martin Hughes

Tan y Castell School Governor – Cllr. Wendy Williams

Council Sub-Committees

Staffing – Chairman, Vice Chairman, Cllrs. Mark Lewis, Christopher Braithwaite and Giles Bentham

Finance – Chairman, Vice Chairman, Cllrs. Martin Hughes, Reg Chapman, Christopher Braithwaite and Giles Bentham

B Budget Plan

It was reported that the Council had spent £10,009.81 (which included bank charges) since the start of the new financial year and this was £42.06 more expenditure than what was earmarked in the budget for the 2026/27 year.

C HAL - CIC

The following report was received from Cllr. Reg Chapman with regards to the latest situation regarding HAL - Harlech and Ardudwy Leisure (HAL) and Harlech Community Investment CIC

Since the April meeting of the Community Council discussions over the transfer from HAL to the new CIC have continued. The issue on the potential for any Welsh land tax valuation on this transfer is currently being reviewed. No transfer can take place until this is resolved as this would create a negative equity situation.

There have been two break-ins and this is a worrying situation. Temporary repairs to stop further ingress have been made thanks to Simon Dawson.

Conversations with other stake holders including Harlech Silver Band have commenced and these will be developed in the next few weeks.

Because the project impacts on several activities, other proposals for users of the Playing Fields are needed to get the most benefit from this potential development. An active KGV group is being created. Proposals for redevelopment and creating opportunity will form part of early discussion.

A further issue for Harlech Community Council is on how it can most effectively give direction to the new CIC. Cllr Maxwell is bringing forward proposals for a strategy and development group from within the Council and this could control the direction of the new CIC. This will ensure accountability and engagement in its direction.

All Councillors agreed that the projects committee take over and manage the CiC Harlech Investment Company

D Council's Annual Report

The Clerk reported that she had prepared the fourth annual report on behalf of the Council and that she had sent it to every Member in advance of the meeting. It was agreed that this report was correct after changing one sentence in the Chairman's statement from "the closure of Harlech and Ardudwy Leisure" to "the closure of Harlech swimming pool". Everyone agreed for this annual report to be uploaded onto the Council's website.

E Review Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

The Clerk reported that she had placed this matter on the agenda because the above Rules were supposed to be reviewed annually but this Council had not done so since 2023. The Clerk had sent copies of these Rules to every Member before this meeting so that they could have a look at them. It was agreed that the Standing Orders and the Financial Regulations were correct apart from it was only 3 days instead of 7 days notice that has to be given for meetings in the Standing Orders.

Every Member agreed, to raise the level at which a single quote was required from £5k to £10k apart from Cllr. Giles Bentham who was against. His proposal to remain at £5k was not supported.

F King George V and Llyn y Felin Playing Fields

The Clerk reported that she had received an e-mail from Mr. Joe Patton together with a picture showing that the new path had been created and also the gate had been installed so as to enable people with limited mobility get access to the seats. Also asking if it would be possible not to mow the grass around the welsh fruit trees in this area so that the wildflowers can grow. Everyone agreed to this and also everyone was willing for Mr. Joe Patton to take a ROSPA course so as to enable him to be qualified to inspect the play equipment in both play parks on a regular basis and also everyone agreed to pay the course fee.

Cllr. Christopher Braithwaite stated that he had not heard back from G. L. Jones with regards to the site meeting prior to purchasing the new play equipment.

A vote of thanks was given to the Harlech Gardening Club and the Goleudy Church for planting the flowers outside the church.

The Chairman stated that he would be meeting a representative from Sovereign Play at Llyn y Felin playing field on the 11th of next month at 12 p.m. and Cllr. Christopher Braithwaite stated that he would attend if he was available.

G Election of Councillor

The Clerk reported that an advert had been placed on the Council's website and also on the noticeboards stating that there is a vacant seat on the Council. The closing date for receiving nominations was today and the Clerk had been informed that a request for an election to be held had been received by the Electoral Department in Caernarfon and the necessary papers will be sent to her next week.

H Proposed Matters

The Chairman reported that he had been to see the oak tree at Tryfan, Bron y Graig and that it was on the Community Council's land. It was agreed for the Clerk to contact Snowdonia Nation Park to seek permission to carry out work on it and then contact Mr. Tom Edwards.

Cllr. Simon Turner reported that weeds need to be cleared outside the public toilets by the Memorial Hall and he agreed to do this work.

Cllr. Simon Turner informed the Members that due to the generosity of some local businesses the erecting of the bunting had been completed.

Cllr. Giles Bentham wanted to know had a meeting been held with the Chairman and Cllrs. Martin Hughes and Christopher Braithwaite to discuss developing new ways of working to improve the Council's efficiency and effectiveness.

Cllr. Giles Bentham wanted to know if any progress had been made with regards to obtaining the admin of the Council's facebook page.

Concern was voiced at the speeding that is done on the Morfa road and also wanted to know if a crossing would be erected by Ty Canol. The Clerk agreed to contact the relevant Officers with regards to this matter.

The Chairman agreed to contact One Voice Wales regarding the Clerk's wages.

Cllr. Reg Chapman wanted to start discussions with regards to the Community Council having a room in the Old Library.

Cllr. Reg Chapman voiced concern that the domain for the website had still not been received, but this matter was resolved and domain received.

5.9 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Erection of single storey extension to front elevation to replace existing conservatory, replacement of existing rear conservatory roof, alterations to fenestration and replacement of existing flat roof over office Aris, 4 Pen-y-Bryn, Harlech (NP5/61/476A)

Support this application.

Certificate of Lawful Use (Existing) for use of first floor flat as a dwellinghouses (Use Class C3) used as a sole or main residence and occupied for more than 183 days in any calendar year (Re-Submission) Plas Flat, Spar Shop, High Street, Harlech (NP5/61/LULB280F)

Support this application

5.10 RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

The Responsible Financial Officer reported that there was £59,718.81 in the current account and £85,890.67 in the reserve account.

Invoices needing payment

Mr. G. J. Williams - £168.00 – cut grass in football field and King George V playing field
Mr. Meirion Evans - £1,560.00 - create path and install gate in King George V playing field
Mr. Meirion Griffith - £255.00 - cut grass in public cemetery

Mr. Meirion Griffith - £105.00 - cut grass in various locations
Mr. Meirion Griffith - £45.00 - cut grass in Llyn y Felin playing field
Old Library Committee - £216.00 – hire of meeting room
Clear Insurance - £2,502.56 – Council’s insurance for the year*
Mr. Joe Patton - £350.00 - sundries for community garden (out of King George V bank account)

*It was agreed to pay the Clear Insurance invoice once the finance sub committee had reviewed the Council’s insurance policy.

Applications for Financial Contribution

Harlech and Ardudwy Leisure - £1,700

The above payments were processed by Cllr. Mark Lewis and Cllr Simon Turner 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

Sally Rapson - £25.00 rent allotment no. 9
Tim Brooks - £20.00 – rent allotment no.5
Linda Soar - £20.00 – rent allotment no 11 (a)
Lisa Robertson - £20.00 – rent allotment no. 10
Cyngor Gwynedd - £42,500.00 – half the precept
Dafi Owen - £150.00 – rent allotments nos. 1, 2 a 3
Paula Ireland - £30.00 – rent allotment no. 7
Gwynedd Council - £8,062.15 – reimbursement of car parking income
Customs & Excise - £902.90 - reimbursement of VAT

Invoices paid since the last meeting

Catrin Soraya Williams – £145.00 - translation services

The Treasurer reported that that the Internal Audit had been completed and there were no significant matters arising apart from the following –

It is recommended that the Council take appropriate steps to mitigate the following risks:

- Risk of losses or unauthorised payments when processing payments online i.e. no online dual authorisation for bank transactions.
- Risk of fines from HMRC on staff costs paid without having been reviewed and declared for tax purposes.
- Risk of the Council not fulfilling its employment obligations by failing to provide sufficient evidence to determine staff employment status.
- Risk of financial losses where there is no systematic review of the insurance policy to check whether or not it is adequate.

The Treasurer reported that she had completed the Annual Return up to 31st March 2026, the Members went through this return and agreed to approve it and it was also agreed that the Chairman and Clerk/Treasurer sign this on behalf of the Council.

5.11 CORRESPONDENCE

A One Voice Wales

Received an e-mail regarding Launch of the One Voice Wales Civility and Respect Pledge and asking the Council to complete and sign the Pledge. The Clerk had already sent this e-mail to every Member. It was agreed to put this matter on next month’s agenda.

B Gwynedd Council

Received an e-mail regarding Green and Blue Infrastructure Study and stating that they have recently received a grant to carry out a feasibility assessment of green and blue infrastructure in various urban areas across the county. Also stating that they have identified Harlech as a suitable area for research because of the relatively low urban tree canopy rates, which is a great opportunity for the County Council and Town Council to explore options to restore nature and ecosystem resilience. As a start to the research and design process, they would therefore like to meet with the Council to discuss the scope of the study and understand their priorities. If the Council is interested in meeting with them to learn more about the project, the form below needs to be completed with our availability.

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSehVHXsPPwGNm2sNz6W5tVilyqlqQQDLffF3raEHZPjyrmgA/viewform?usp=publish-editor>.

Cllr. Reg Chapman stated that he had already registered to attend this meeting.

SIGNED.....Chairman

DATE..... 889