

MARCHWIEL COMMUNITY COUNCIL'S
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 9th NOVEMBER 2019 AT MARCHWIEL VILLAGE HALL AT 7:00 PM

Present:

Councillor Mr Terry Edwards – Chair

Councillor Mrs Sharon Lloyd - Vice Chair *

“ Mrs Morag Browning	Councillor Mr Stephen Jones*
“ Mrs Patricia Downes	“ Mr Nigel Lloyd
“ Mr Andrew Edwards*	“ Miss Sally Roberts
“ Mr Russell Jones	Vacancy x2

Mrs Victoria Jones – Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

*** Absent**

Invited Guests: Community Nurse

Welcome

Cllr Edwards welcomed Members and the Community Nurse Jane and Geraldine Manager of Penley Rainbow Centre. They informed Members of the work carried out at the Rainbow Centre and how the Community Nurse has and is supporting residents of Marchwiel. They mentioned that they had been approached by the three Trustees of Marchwiel Village Hall with a view of taking over the management of Marchwiel Village Hall. Members were surprised by this news as they had not been informed by the trustees of this as an option. The Rainbow Centre agreed to inform Members of any decisions made. They handed out brochures to circulate of what the Rainbow Centre Penley offers to residents. The Chair thanked them for attending the meeting.

109 Apologies for Absence

Apologies received from Councillors Mrs S Lloyd, A Edwards and S Jones

110 Police Report

North Wales Police report of the October crimes had been emailed to Members
The Clerk reported that she had attended the NW Police meeting Tuesday 15th October at Llay Police Station. She added that it was an informative meeting well attended by local Community Councillors. One item discussed was the use of CCTV has helped reduce crime. She added that it was important for Members to attend.

111 Declarations of Interest¹

The Clerk reminded Members that they should declare the existence and nature of any personal and or prejudicial interest.

112 Confirmation of Minutes

AGREED – That the minutes of the Meeting held on October 9th be approved.

113 Matters concerning Wrexham County Borough Council (Part 2)²

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The Chairman declared that Members of the Press and Public will be excluded from discussions on this matter as it contains items of a sensitive nature, under the provisions of Part 2 of the Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960.

No matters discussed.

114 Finance

a) The Council proposed and seconded the following:

Income and Expenditure for the Period 9th October 2019 – 13th November 2019

Total income @ 12/11/2019 (19/20) = £1,075.00

Total expenditure @ 12/11/2019 (19/20) = £1,716.09

b) **External 2018/19 Audit** : The Clerk informed Members that she had tried to make contact and left messages to enquire when the Audit Return is to be returned. However, when she spoke to the Auditor General Dept. he apologised and reported that the external 2018/19 Audit could not be completed until he had completed his report.

c) Extra-Ordinary Audit carried out by Auditor General for Wales

Auditor General for Wales: Marchwiel Community Council: Audit of Accounts 2011 - 2018

Following receipt of correspondence from a local elector, I undertook an extraordinary audit of the accounts of Marchwiel Community Council in accordance with section 37 of the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004. The audit covered the financial years from 2011-12 up to and including 2017-18 and focussed on the following areas:

· **Maintenance of accounting records** - *The spreadsheets appear to be well maintained and a full and accurate record of the Council's transactions. The Council should ensure that the records are updated on a timely basis and burial fees banked on a timely basis*

· **Burial records and fees** - *The Clerk had previously for a period of time been paid an administration fee for each burial. This procedure ceased in 2016. The Council contacted HMRC to address the issue of unpaid Tax regarding unpaid PAYE. HMRC responded that no tax or NI is due. He noted that the Clerk did not always collect a fee for the burial administration she carried out. The Clerk exercised this discretion herself without reference to a council policy. However, he acknowledged that this did not result in a loss to the Council but rather reduced her own income. Members Burial Ground practices were updated and correct procedures implemented in 2016. The Council pays the Clerk through AVOW who deduct the necessary PAYE Tax and NI.*

· **Use of the Chairman's allowance** - *The Council pays the Chair an annual allowance of £300 to cover the expenses of the office. The council does not require receipts to be provided for the use of the allowance. In his view, the payment of an allowance was permitted by section 15(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 which permits the Council to pay such allowance as the council think reasonable for the purpose of enabling the chair to meet the expenses of his office. The 1972 Act does not impose any further restrictions on the use of the allowance.*

· **Clerk's remuneration** - *I consider that the Clerk's hours of work specified within the contract of employment should reflect the time required to effectively undertake the role. Payment of overtime should therefore only be necessary in exceptional circumstances.*

In view of the overtime paid, it is important that the Council reviews the work they expect the Clerk to undertake and make a detailed assessment of the time required to fulfil the role to determine whether the contracted hours are sufficient to fulfil the role. Any contractual changes considered necessary would need to be negotiated with the Clerk and approved by the Council.

Recommendations - he makes the following recommendations for improvement to the Council:

R1 *The Council should review the accounting and burial records periodically to ensure they have been properly maintained and are up to date.*

R2 *Before introducing significant changes to its internal procedures eg payroll, the Council should seek advice to ensure it does not introduce an unlawful arrangement.*

Contd... Recommendations - I make the following recommendations for improvement to the Council:

R3 The Council should review the Clerk's programme of work to ensure that the Clerk has been allocated sufficient time to discharge the role.

R4 The Council should review its overtime policy to ensure that overtime is not utilised to pay the Clerk to undertake activities which are core components of her role, eg maintaining financial records and preparing the annual accounts.

R5 Following a review of the role of the Clerk, the Council should review the Clerk's contract of employment to ensure the contract terms are clear and unambiguous.

This letter summarises my findings from the audit and sets out recommendations for improvement of the Council's financial management and governance arrangements.

I would like to express my thanks to Mrs Victoria Jones (the Clerk) and Cllr Morag Browning (Cllr Browning) acting on behalf on the Council, for the assistance they provided in completing my audit.

Members Approved the report below but confirmed that they have set up a Staffing Committee and are working on the Recommendations 1-5 listed above and currently updating the Clerks Job Description and current Contract of Employment.

115 S137 Financial Assistance

Resolved that, in accordance with Council policy, applications for financial assistance from organisations be considered once a year in May.

116 Planning

The Clerk reported receipt of no planning applications.

117 Clerks Report

No additional reports.

118 County Councillor Report

County Councillor John Pritchard has not sent his monthly report to the Community Council.

119 Burial Ground

Members reported hearing comments of how nice the Burial Ground was looking. Cllr Browning suggested that documents for the grounds maintenance of the Burial Ground such as Insurance Policy and training courses should be checked regularly.

Members complained of dog mess in the Burial Ground and on the pavements. Cllr Russell Jones agreed to look for No Dogs Allowed signs.

120 Street Lighting

Members reported Elwyn Drive requires a new lamp

121 Nature Reserve

The Clerk reported speaking to Five Fords who agreed we could have our own padlock and 'Daisy Chain' it though their chain to gain access to the Nature Reserve. She agreed to look at padlocks but first make contact with the North Wales Wildlife Trust.

122 Welcome Garden and Defibrillator

Members RESOLVED to purchase the three ECO benches for the Welcome Garden at a total cost of £784.98. Leon has agreed to fix into place. They may require a metal plate to be made to make secure.

The Clerk informed Members that WCBC had sent two contractors details to approach for quotes to connect an electric supply to the map. The external defibrillator requires an electric supply to keep it at a constant temperature, have an electric supply to the map for lights and a source for Christmas tree lights. Jones Lighting did not want to attend a site visit and asked the Clerk to send the technical details of what was required for them to quote. Mega Electrical responded and agreed to attend the January meeting.

The Clerk informed Members of prices of a living Christmas tree which they could light at Christmas time.

RESOLVED: that the Clerk purchase the tree at a cost of £40.00 plus £4.00 compost on behalf of Members and purchase 2 x sets of solar powered lights for £9.34 and £12.99.

123 Website

The Clerk informed Members that she had not had time to work on the Website as it had only been two weeks since the last meeting.

124 Remembrance Sunday and Christmas

The Clerk had met the Chairman to give him the poppies. Members thanked the Chairman Cllr T Edwards, Cllrs Mrs Sharon Lloyd and Cllr Mr Lloyd for fixing the poppies into place.

The Clerk informed Members that Rev Sue Huyton has prepared the Service Sheet this year and has taken to the printers. **Members RESOLVED to pay the printing costs of £17.28. and pay £60 towards 20 street light poppies from North Wales Poppy Appeal.**

The wreath was given to Cllr Sharon Lloyd and Cllr Russell Jones agreed to read at the service. The Clerk agreed to send the reading to him once she received it.

Christmas: Father Christmas Visit: Cllr Sally Roberts reported that the Round Table are keen to attend Marchwiel. Cllr Andy Edwards had been asked if he could help with refreshments again? he responded that he was unable to do so as he had his own event on at the pub with the Male voice choir singing. However, when he heard they were unable to use the Village Hall he paid for extra staff to cover and offered to help at his own expense.

125 Events Calendar

a) Bulb Planting: Members discussed to plant spring bulbs i.e. J Parker Dutch Bulbs, the Horticultural college and the Erlas Garden Project might be interested in helping to plant if in safe areas i.e. not main road. Cllr Browning agreed to make further enquiries.

126 Correspondence

Email correspondence was noted by Members: It had only been two weeks.

127 Members Urgent Announcements' and requests for future meeting items

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9:00pm.

PRESIDING CHAIRMAN - COUNCILLOR MR TERENCE EDWARDS

Signed as a correct record _____ this 12th February 2020