

**HOLT COMMUNITY COUNCIL- MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 26TH 2023 AT 7-00PM AT THE KENYON HALL, HOLT.**

PRESENT: Councillors: Mr J Cubitt, Mr S Lewis, Mrs G Jones, Mr D Bithell, Mr D Powell, Mr J Pridding, Mr A Jones, Councillor M Morris, Mr G Mitchell, Clerk

APOLOGIES: Mr D Munnerley, Mr J Hughes, Ms A Shone

The meeting was formally opened by the Chairperson, Mr J Cubitt, who welcomed everyone. There were reports of 3 recent deaths in the village and a silence was held in respect of the passing of Sandra Broderick, Anne Moss, and Gwen Bliss; the silence also included the recent passing of the Reverend Clive Tucker, who was not a resident of the village but who had been Vicar at Holt Church and was well known to many people in the village.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: There were no requests for any amendments and the Minutes of the June meeting were accepted as a true record; Proposed Mrs G Jones, seconded Mr S Lewis.

POLICE REPORT: There was no Police presence at the meeting but the Clerk had received an email from PCSO Lisa-Marie Davies advising that there had only been one incident which was a report of youths playing “knock and run” in the area.

ITEM 1: MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES:

1.COMMUNITY GARDENERS: The judging for the Wales in Bloom Competition had resulted in Holt being awarded a Gold for the entry in the large village category; there were also 3 areas in the village which had been entered into the “Its Your Neighbourhood” scheme and “The Cross” achieved a Level 4 “thriving”, the “Village Entrance and Copse”, Level 5, “outstanding”, and Holt Gardeners section of “The Allotments”, Level 5 “ Ourstanding”. Holt was also awarded “The National Certificate of Distinction” for Its Your Neighbourhood, which was the 3rd year running. In addition, Wrexham’s entry into the Wales in Bloom, in which Holt also took part, received a Gold Award. The results for the Britain in Bloom Competition are announced on Monday 23rd October.

The Chairman asked that it be recorded in the Community Council Minutes that the Councillors wanted to express their congratulations to the Holt Gardeners and to the residents of the village for their efforts to achieve such a fantastic result.

The Clerk advised that Holt Gardeners were holding their Harvest Fayre on the Cross on Sunday 8th October (same day as Chester Marathon) and were also planning to hold a Community Christmas Fayre on Sunday 3rd December, for which permissions for road closures had already been applied.

2.CHURCH GREEN BENCHES: It was agreed that the benches previously identified by Mr S Lewis were suitable to be located on the Church Green, and the Clerk was asked to order two benches at a cost for each of £329 + Vat £75.80 + shipping of £50; the Clerk was asked to see if there was any negotiation on price and shipping as 2 benches were being purchased.

3.FINANCE SHEET: The Clerk gave a breakdown of the Finance Sheet for July and August; Income for July was £371.78 and August £11987.25 (which included the second precept payment of £11545); Expenditure was £4698.35 for July and August £2869.96; the Clerk had previously advised that expenditure for July would be higher due to adhoc invoices such as for Audits and Play Area Inspections. Proposed Mr J Pridding, seconded Mr D Powell, that the finance sheet be accepted.

4.SKILLS TRAINING: The Skills Training Matrix was discussed and it was agreed that it was ok to distribute with no changes; the Clerk was asked to forward to Mr Powell, any emails that were received with regards to available training courses as provided by One Voice Wales. The Clerk advised that there was a small bursary available towards the cost of the courses (£100 in total) and the Chairman advised all Councillors to see what courses were available to enhance their skillset with regards to Council business.

Both Mr A Jones and Mr D Bithell had completed the “New Councillor Induction Course” and found it useful.

As the number of courses that Councillors would undertake was unknown, it was not possible to set a budget for training at this point but it can be considered and included when budgetary meetings take place later in the year.

5.DEFIBRILLATOR: As the Clerk had not heard whether the Defibrillator at Bellis Bros was suitable to be located on a case on an external wall, it was decided to proceed with the purchase of another Defibrillator; Mr S Lewis said he would look for the details of where the defibrillator located at Nisa was purchased, as it was felt best to try to have both defibrillators of the same make to enable consumable purchases to be standardised.

6.MUGA/PUBLIC OPEN SPACE: A discussion was held regarding placing waste collection bins at the Hillfield Public Open Space; it was suggested to speak to WCBC initially to make sure that Wrexham Council would be responsible for making sure that they are regularly emptied; Clerk to contact Streetscene.

Mr Lewis advised that the hedge fronting onto Francis Lane from the Hillfield Open Space was in need of cutting back; Clerk to ask Stuart Jones if he could cut the hedge. In addition, the saplings at the entrance to the Hillfield Open space off Francis Lane have died and will need replacing, which is best done in the Spring of 2024.

7.HOLT VILLAGE WEBSITE: The Clerk has been in contact with Matt Rowlands with regard to setting up a bespoke website solely for the reporting of Community Council affairs; as this would involve more work, Mr Rowlands needed to work out new costings. He had communicated to the Clerk that the costs for the initial set up and development of the website, to include website development, a file management system and set up and registration of a domain name and hosting would be £550, 50% (£275 to be paid initially) and 50% to be paid upon website handover. In addition, there would be ongoing annual costs of approx. £154/annum, for hosting of the Holt CC website (£12/month) and domain name registration (approx. £10/year).

After a discussion, it was agreed to go ahead with the development of the website; the Clerk was asked to see if it was possible to have the website as

<http://holtcommunitycouncil.gov.uk>.

Proposed Mr D Powell, seconded Mrs G Jones.

8. PLAY EQUIPMENT: The Clerk and Councillor G Jones had met with Carla Hinde from WCBC to discuss matters highlighted in the Annual Play Equipment Report; the policy of WCBC with regards to play equipment is to manage and maintain and repair where necessary and in the report there were no repairs in need of urgent attention; however, it was agreed that some items of play equipment, both at Dee Park and the Church Green, were looking worn and in need of painting; it was agreed that Mrs Hinde would go out to tender for the items to be repainted; in addition, the edges around the climbing frame at Dee Park have receded and a wet pour repair is needed at some point. The Clerk had received the quotes for the painting; unfortunately, only one company had engaged with the tender process and the quote for the repainting of the play equipment at Dee Park was £1765 + Vat and the quote for the repainting at the Church Green was £1447 + vat, a total of £3212 + vat for repainting; the quote for wet pour repair was £1003 + Vat. As only one quote had been received, the Clerk was asked to enquire whether any local painters would be interest in quoting for the work; in addition as the autumn/winter inclement weather is approaching, it was agreed to consider getting the work done in the spring of 2024 and/or spreading the cost over 2 years by doing one area in 2024 and the other in 2025.

9.FINANCES: The Clerk advised that as agreed at the previous meeting, he had opened a "Liquidity Manager 35 Day Notice Account with NatWest Bank and had transferred £85,000 from the Business Reserve Account to the Liquidity 35 account to take advantage of the higher interest paid. The Clerk further advised that as the approx. bank balance at the end of September would be £108,000 and bills to be paid in October were looking to be less than £3000, another £10,000 could be moved to the Liquidity 35 day account. Proposed Mr J Pridding, Seconded Mr D Powell, agreed.

ITEM 2: CORRESPONDENCE:

10. PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

a) Repainting of windows to front and rear, The Old Gate Cottage, Bridge Street, Holt: **NO OBJECTIONS**

b) Installation of replacement doors and windows, Nos 2,4,5,6 Smithfield Street, Holt; **No OBJECTIONS**

c) Change of Use of Light Industrial Building and Yard Space to provide storage facility, The Warehouse, Buck Road, Commonwood, Holt; **NO OBJECTIONS**

11.The Clerk had received an email from Castle Green Homes, asking if the Community Council, having taken ownership and responsibility for the Hillfield Garden Open Space, would be willing to take on the ownership and maintenance of the 2 streetlights situated there. It is believed that at present, the ownership and maintenance of the lights are the responsibility of the Hillfield Gardens maintenance company. After a discussion, the Councillors decided that as the lights had not been mentioned in the transfer of the Muga/Open Space from Castle Green Homes to the Community Council and likewise no financial considerations made for repairs and ongoing maintenance, the Community Council could not agree to take over responsibility for the lights, as to do so would run the risk of the Council having to possibly fund major repairs in the event of unforeseen issues in the future, with no reserved funding allocated in the budgets.

ITEM 3: AGENDA:

12. REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY: The Clerk has received from Gresford Royal British Legion, 37 Poppy Crosses and 3 Poppy Wreaths; in addition, the Clerk has contacted Apple Sound regarding hiring a sound system for the event. The Clerk will contact Cat Williams re playing the Last Post, and Paul Gaade re speaking to Reverend Tudor for a Minister to officiate at the service on the Cross.

13. CHESTER MARATHON: The Clerk has been asked by the event organisers to ensure that Holt Public Toilets are open for the Marathon as the route passes in front and the toilets may need to be used by runners and the watching public.

14. ALLOTMENTS: A small allotment has become vacant and the Clerk was asked to contact the person first on the waiting list to offer it to them. A general discussion was held regarding the Allotments as the Clerk had received correspondence pointing out that some allotments looked as though they had not been tended this year; it was noted that at least two allotment holders had some medical issues this year that meant they were unable to maintain and work the allotments; it was agreed that the situation cannot be continued ongoing next year, and that consideration would need to be given to asking the allotment holders whether they would give up their allotment, especially as there is a waiting list. The Clerk was asked to send out a letter to all allotment holders in March 2024, advising that the Community Council would be expecting an improvement in the condition of allotments going forward.

It was also mentioned that a car is being left parked overnight which is against the allotment policy and the gate to Chester Lane is also often left not closed; the Clerk was asked to put a sign on the car asking for it to be moved and on the gate instructing that it is closed when not in use.

15. TREES: The Clerk had received an email from a resident of Laburnum Way regarding a silver birch tree in the cemetery which has branches overlapping into their property; the resident is concerned at the height of the tree and potential damage to her property should the tree be damaged by strong winds; in addition, leaves and debris from the tree fall into her garden in windy conditions; the clerk was asked to contact John Bruin from WCBC to ask for a site visit; in addition there are other large trees in the village causing some concern re potential storm damage, especially on the Church Green and overlooking the bowling green so these can be discussed at the same time.

ITEM 4: ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

The Clerk had received a letter from the Kenyon Hall Committee advising that they will be opening for refreshments on Remembrance Sunday and requesting a small donation towards the cost; as this was granted last year, there were no objections raised.

Mr Pridding mentioned that the hedge on the left hand side of the path from Green Street up to the cemetery was very high; it was felt that the hedge could be cut to approx. 8ft high and still maintain privacy for funerals and people going to the cemetery; clerk was asked for speak to Stuart Jones for a quote for the work. Also it was noted that the hedge on the right hand side had not been cut this year and the Clerk was asked to approach the new owners of Manor Park to ask for the hedge to be cut.

ACCOUNTS: Approved for payment in September and proposed payments for October. Proposed Mr J Pridding, Seconded Mr D Powell. Agreed:

PAYMENTS FOR SEPTEMBER

2998 – AVOW, Salary, wage, and charge	£777.50
2999 – Shane Coupland, Grass Cuts, Bowling Green, August	£270.00
3000 - M&L, Grass Cuts Holt Castle 03/08 (£252.00)	
Grass Cuts Village Entrance x3 Aug (£255.17)	£507.17
3001 – Hafren Dyfrdwy, Water Supply Toilets 04/01-25/07/23	£1483.11
3002 – Farndon Heating Solutions, Excess Consumption, Toilets	£54.00

PROPOSED PAYMENTS FOR OCTOBER

3003 – Shane Coupland, Grass Cuts Bowling Green, September	£185.00
3004 – Matt Rowlands, First Payment, Website Development	£275.00
3005 – AVOW, Salary, Charge, wages	£777.50
3006 – Eric Jones, Grass Cuts All Areas September	£240.00
3007 – Gresford RBL, Poppies and wreathes, Remembrance Sunday	£112.00
3008 - M&L, Grass Cuts Holt Castle 08/09 (£252.00)	
Grass Cuts Village Entrance September (£170.11)	£422.17
3009 – Kenyon Hall Committee, Hire of Hall, September	£30.40
3010 – J&L Garden Services, Grass Cuts Hillfield POS, September	£145.00
3011 – Shane Coupland, Autumn Work Bowling Green, Scarifying etc	£696.00

**NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD AT THE KENYON HALL ON
TUESDAY 31th OCTOBER AT 7-00 PM**

