

**HOLT COMMUNITY COUNCIL - MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY 27th FEBRUARY 2024 AT 7-00PM AT THE KENYON HALL, HOLT.**

PRESENT: Councillors: Mr J Cubitt, Mr S Lewis, Mr D Bithell, Mr D Powell, Mr A Jones, Mr D Munnerley, Mrs G Jones, Ms A Shone, Mr J Pridding, Mr J Hughes
Mr G Mitchell, Clerk

APOLOGIES: Councillor M Morris,

The meeting was formally opened by the Chairperson, Mr J Cubitt, who welcomed everyone. There were reports of 3 recent deaths of either Holt residents or persons with Holt connections and a silence was held in respect of the passing of Miss Denise Hewitt, Mrs Madeline Nelson, and Mrs Evelyn Porter.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: There were no requests for any amendments and the minutes of the January meeting were accepted as a true record; Proposed Mr J Cubitt, seconded Mr D Powell.

POLICE REPORT: There was once again no Police presence at the meeting, but the Clerk had received an email from PCSO Lisa-Marie Davies advising that there had been 2 incidents in Holt reported to the Police in December. A report for January had been received a few hours before the meeting which showed that there was 1 reported incident.

ITEM 1: MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES:

1.COMMUNITY GARDENERS: Following on from the meeting held on January 10th 2024, regarding the idea of creating a “Holt Nature and Heritage Reserve” along the banks of the River Dee from Holt Castle to Dee Lane, Mr Bob Campbell together with other members of Holt Community Gardeners, have been busy firming up the proposal and working on costs and potential funding. An “Expression of Interest” under the “Communities and Place Key Fund” for funding had been submitted to WCBC who are the administrators locally for the “UK Shared Prosperity Fund”; it has recently been confirmed that the Expression of Interest for funding has passed the first stage of the process, which means that the full application for funding has to be submitted by February 29th 2024; should funding be secured, the work would need to be completed by 31st October 224.

In addition to the Nature and Heritage Reserve, the Gardeners are looking at potential areas for wildflower planting, such as near to the village entrance from Wrexham Road (in front of the “gates” and/or behind the grass verges on the main road) plus behind the hydrangeas and trees at the chevrons; in addition, other areas for consideration are in front of the school car park and areas around the main village car park.

Mr S Jones has cut the hedge on both sides behind the “Peace Border” in the Cemetery.

2. CHURCH GREEN BENCHES: Councillor Pridding has received a quote for installing the benches and fabricating and fitting 4 brackets to hold down the benches of £130 + VAT; in addition a quote was received from Allweld for fabricating and fitting a replacement height restriction barrier at the car park

entrance for the sum of £564.57 plus VAT; Proposed Mr S Lewis, seconded Mr D Bithell that the quotes be accepted which was agreed by all; Mr Pridding was asked to advise Allweld to go ahead with the work.

3. FINANCES: The Finance sheet was discussed and agreed as acceptable; Income for January was £480.77 and Expenditure was £3600.32, which included the second payment to WCBC for trade refuse, repairs to play equipment at the Church Green, the second payment for the Play Areas inspections and hedge cutting.

Proposed Mr J Pridding, seconded Mr A Jones, agreed by all. The Clerk advised the Councillors that there were a number of items with potential spending that would be discussed at the meeting.

4. SKILLS TRAINING: No Councillors, other than the Chairman, had to date indicated that they wished to undertake any training courses. Mr J Cubitt wished to be booked on a “Planning for Future Generations” Course, run by Planning Aid Wales, and a “Understanding the Law” Module run by One Voice Wales; Clerk to organise.

5. DEFIBRILLATOR: The Clerk advised that he had spoken to a representative of management from Bellis Bros and they were quite happy for a defibrillator to be sited on an outside wall near to the car park entrance; the Clerk had contacted St Johns Ambulance and been quoted a price of £990 + Vat for a Zoll AEC Plus Defibrillator which is the same as the one located outside Nisa on the Cross; a cabinet to house the defibrillator would be approx. £550 plus Vat and the electrical running cost to heat the cabinet would be approx. £15 per year. Proposed Mr J Hughes, seconded Mr D Powell, agreed by all, that the defibrillator be purchased.

6. PLAY EQUIPMENT: The Clerk said that he had not moved forward on this yet but hoped to have quotes in for the next meeting.

7. ALLOTMENTS: The Clerk advised that the temporary signs on the gate from Chester Lane onto the allotments instructing that the gate was to be kept closed at all times except when in use by allotment holders had disappeared; in addition, the cars owned by the allotment holder previously spoken to by the Clerk had been seen parked at the allotments again overnight. Councillor Pridding has also seen the cars parked there on numerous occasions and had taken photos which he had passed on to the Clerk. After a discussion, the Clerk was asked to write to the allotment holder giving a last warning and to advise that if the cars were seen parked overnight again at the allotments, that the allotment holder would be given 30 days’ notice to vacate the allotment which would then be allocated to others on the waiting list.

It was also agreed to write to all allotment holders advising that all allotments have to be seen to be worked regularly and kept to a reasonable standard; unfortunately, at present, some allotments seem to be worked intermittently, are below the standard required and work is needed to bring all the allotments up to an acceptable level. Holt Community Gardeners are going to include the allotments as part of their offering for the RHS “Its Your Neighbourhood” 2024 and also the Wales in Bloom Competition in 2025.

8. BUDGET: The Precept figure for 2024/25 of £36,228, an increase of 4.6% from the previous financial year, has formally been returned to WCBC. The Clerk informed the meeting that he expected costs to go up for the work done for the Council especially as the National Minimum wage was increasing by £1/hour

from April. As previously advised, WCBC were increasing their charges by 6.7%.

9.SPEEDING AND SPEED SIGNS: Because of the persistent speeding through the village, the Clerk has submitted a complaint to Go Safe, completed the appropriate paperwork, and was waiting for further developments.

The Clerk also informed the meeting that the interactive speed signs had been purchased by Holt CC in November 2018 at a cost of £4612.64 plus VAT, and had been switched off as they could not be adjusted to 20mph; the Clerk had written to WCBC and received a reply, informing that there was no money in their budget to assist in purchasing new interactive signs, that the grant given to WCBC by the Welsh Government did not cover their costs and they had over 60 interactive signs that either needed expensive upgrades or replacing. The Clerk had made enquires and to purchase 2 replacement interactive signs would cost £5287.14 plus VAT; this would represent an unbudgeted cost of 15% of the Precept. The Clerk suggested that he write to the local MS, Lesley Griffiths, who is Minister for Rural Affairs, and also Sarah Atherton, MP for Wrexham, to see if either could help to secure funding; this was agreed by the Councillors.

ITEM 2: CORRESPONDENCE:

10. The Clerk had received correspondence from WCBC advising of work taking place to improve the surface of the section of Bryn Estyn Lane which is restricted to motor vehicles, with the intention of improving the access for all walkers, joggers and cyclists that use the route; in addition, the old gates are being changed to bollards, and as vehicular access is required to the fields by farmers, the bollards are being moved further up the Lane so that keys for gates etc are not needed to access the fields.

11. One Voice Wales had circulated an email offering a free Portrait of His Majesty the King for Community, Town and City Councils in Wales; the email had been circulated to the Councillors and it had been suggested that the Kenyon Hall would be an appropriate building to place the portrait as they also had one of the late Queen Elizabeth II. The Clerk had contacted the Treasurer for the Kenyon Hall Committee, and it was going to be discussed at their next Committee meeting.

12. PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

a) Land North of Bryn Lane, Wrexham Industrial Estate; Hybrid Application Seeking Full Planning Permission For Demolition Of Existing Buildings etc: This is a planning application with amended plans for a proposal first submitted in August 2023 (P2023/0497) and was the subject of an email received by the Clerk from a concerned resident as reported in last month's minutes. This proposal was once again discussed at some length by the Councillors and although the loss of green belt land was regrettable, it was decided to not register a formal comment to the application; the Clerk was asked to put in the minutes that the Councillors recognised that the application may be detrimental to some residents, but that the possibility of the application bringing much needed jobs to the area could not be ignored, jobs which some residents of the Holt community may apply for, and hopefully, be successful in obtaining work. The Industrial Estate employs over ten thousand workers and this application, should it go ahead, may provide employment for up to six hundred more. The Clerk was asked to contact the

concerned resident again to explain the Council position. **NO FORMAL COMMENT TO BE REGISTERED ON THE APPLICATION**

b) Installation Of An Oxidiser, Trans Continental Factory, Ash Road, Wrexham Industrial Estate; **NO OBJECTIONS**

c) Works to Trees Protected by TPO WCBC 235, Bridgewater, Church Street, Holt; **NO OBJECTIONS**

ITEM 3: AGENDA: There were no formal agenda items to discuss that will not be covered elsewhere in the meeting.

ITEM 4: ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

Mr G Jones informed the meeting that the hedge in front of the school car park has been dug up and the border tidied up, with the intention of planting wildflowers, bulbs and fruit trees.

Mrs Jones had been contacted by Mr P Gaade regarding the extension of the time of the last bus from Chester to Farndon at a weekend; Councillor Adrian Waddelove, Ward Councillor for Farndon, had been in discussions with the bus operator and it was believed that this extension was also going to apply to passengers travelling to Holt. The Clerk was asked to write to Councillor Waddelove expressing the thanks of the Council for his work on this matter.

Mr J Hughes advised that cars were not slowing down at the junction of Cross Street and Castle Street and that the on-street markings were in a poor condition; it was suggested that the Clerk contact WCBC to ask that all the village street junction markings be redone to make them clearer to drivers.

Mr S Lewis asked if new hedge saplings were going to be purchased to replace the ones that had died at the entrance to the Hillfield POS from Francis Lane; the Clerk advised that he would order replacement saplings.

The Clerk advised that Mr D Munnerley had removed a dead sapling and replaced it with the one growing near to an established tree on the Hillfield POS; in addition, new flexible bands have been purchased to secure the saplings to the upright posts as the existing bands were digging into the saplings.

The Clerk also thanked Mr D Bithell for repairing the water leak on one of the troughs at the allotments.

The Clerk advised the meeting that Monument Landscapes had declined the offer to quote for the grass cutting in the Cemetery and other areas which were previously done by Mr Eric Jones who has decided to retire; Monument Landscapes advised that they are not set up for the kind of cut and finish that the cemetery would need. J&L Garden Services, who presently maintain the grass and borders at the Hillfield POS, were also asked to quote and submitted costings; they already cut the grass in Farndon Churchyard and following a meeting with Mr P Gaade from the Holt Church Council, have been asked to cut the grass in Holt Churchyard. The Councillors agreed to award the contract for grass cutting at Holt Cemetery to J&L Garden Services.

ACCOUNTS: Approved for payment in January and proposed payments for February. Proposed Mr J Pridding, seconded Mr A Jones, Agreed.

PAYMENTS FOR JANUARY

3040 – AVOW, Salary, Wage, Charge		£777.50
3038 – J&L Garden Services, Grass Cuts Hillfield POS, DEC		£145.00
3042 – S Jones, Hedge Cutting		£900.00
3043 – Matt Rowlands, Website Hosting Jan-March		£60.00
3044 – WCBC – 6mnth Play Areas Inspection	£792	
Repairs Play Equipment Church Green	£395.82	
Trade Refuse Collection, 10/23-03/24	£530	£1717.82

PROPOSED PAYMENTS FOR FEBRUARY

3045 – AVOW, Salary, Wage, Charge		£777.50
3046 – Hafren Dyfrdwy, Water Supply Toilets	£493.59	
Water Supply Allotments	£49.18	£542.77
3047 – EDF Energy, Street Lighting 01/11- 31/01		£394.03
3048 – Shane Coupland, Raking Leaves, Bowling Green		£41.00
3049 – FM Security, Repairs CCTV Toilets		£110.40
3050 – J&L Garden Services, Grass Cuts Hillfield POS JAN		£145.00
3051 – Kenyon Hall Committee, Hall Hire January		£30.40

NEXT MEETING OF HOLT COMMUNITY COUNCIL TO BE HELD AT THE KENYON HALL ON TUESDAY 26TH MARCH AT 7-00PM

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