

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF GRESFORD COMMUNITY COUNCIL (HELD REMOTELY<sup>i</sup>) on the 4<sup>th</sup> of February 2021.**

**Members Present:**

Councillors A. Bailey, M. J. Edwards, M. Harriman, J. Hobbley, K. Hobbley, J. Holmes, J. Dutton, J. Jones, M. Wilde, J. Blackmore, A. Merry, B. Blackmore, W. O'Grady, A. Atkinson

**Chair:** Councillor J. Dutton.

**Clerk:** Serena Baxter.

**Apologies:** PCSO.S. Lawrence

**In attendance:** Ruth Thompson, Community Agent (part), Ms L. Clark (part), Mr H. Winston (part)

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- 804. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Apologies were given by PCSO S. Lawrence, North Wales Police.
- 805. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** Members were reminded that they should declare the existence and nature of any personal and or prejudicial interest on the form provided for this purpose for any item under discussion. Councillors declared their interests in advance of the agenda items as follows: Councillor Dutton(19/iii- already put in own comments to the Planning Officer),Councillor Bailey (13/iii as Director of the library, 19/ii as Director of Maes Y Pant),Councillor Merry(19/iii- already put in own comments to the Planning Officer ,13/iii as Director of the library),Councillor Holmes(13/iii grant for Gresford Trust),Councillor Edwards(19/iii declared as a personal ,not prejudicial declaration( Director of Maes y Pant) and stated a wish to speak on the matter) ,Councillor J. Jones ( 13/iii Director of the library),Councillor Atkinson(19/ii and iii, having already put comments in to the Planning Officer) .
- 806. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** Both members of the public present for the meeting had asked to address the Council. The requests were granted, and the meeting was adjourned for ten minutes in accordance with Standing Orders, to allow five minutes per speaker to address to the meeting. Mrs Linda Clark outlined the Planning proposal for the development of land at Quarry Brow (P/2020/0890), noting that gates were included for security, and advising that there is no public right of access, and her intentions to protect neighbouring properties privacy and a planting scheme. Mr H. Winston spoke in opposition to the same proposal (P/2020/0890), outlining the grounds on which he would like to object, including the proposed size of the property and the shared driveway. Both speakers were thanked by the Chair and were advised that they were welcome to stay for the remainder of the meeting or could leave at any point as they wished.
- 807. APPLICATIONS RECEIVED UNDER THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED):** The meeting reconvened, and following the previous item, it was proposed by Councillor Atkinson, and following a vote (10 in favour and 1 abstention) was **RESOLVED** to bring forward item 19 /ii for discussion whilst both members of the public were present. Councillor Bailey declared an interest as a Director of Maes y Pant, and Councillor Atkinson declared an interest as Borough Councillor, having already submitted a statement to the Planning Officer. Both left the meeting and did not take part in the discussion. Councillor Edwards declared a personal interest as Director of Maes y Pant but did not consider his declaration to be prejudicial and stated his intention to speak on the matter.
- i. **P2020/0890: Erection of 1 dwelling- land at Quarry Brow, Gresford, Wrexham:** Councillor Edwards stated that in his view the proposal as outlined in Planning documents would be an overdevelopment. He proposed that the Council should consider objecting to the proposal on the following grounds: This is very clearly over-development of a very constricted plot and would be totally out of keeping with it's surroundings. The plot is four hundred and thirteen square metres of which forty-six per cent is tarmac road and footway over which two adjoining properties have a right of way. The house will cover ninety square metres, some forty per cent of the remaining irregular shaped plot with an established hedge and tree, taking up part of the one hundred and thirty-five square metres of garden. It's height, two storeys with four windows in the pitched roof and a roof terrace, is over-dominant. The house is right up to the edge of the road, also over-dominant. It is close to an existing bungalow, which would be overlooked by windows and a roof terrace. The design is not in keeping with the surrounding properties, particularly Wood Cottage, Pant Cottage, and the adjoining bungalow. The electrically controlled gate set back five metres will not prevent longer delivery vehicles from blocking Quarry Brow while waiting for admittance. The house will be just over one metre from an established tree and hedge which must be retained. However, twenty per cent of the roots of the tree would be built over. Councillor Holmes stated she shared Councillor Edwards

concerns about the proposal, where access to properties and shared driveways are concerned. Councillor Harriman stated he had visited and could not see a reason for the high screening to the site. It is not a large plot and the application location document is confusing. Each document includes a driveway and a portion of footway. These should not be included as they should not form part of any development. The size of the development is inconsistent with the 'grassy bank' area. The visual aspect is not like the comparator properties as stated in the proposal. In his view the proposal is totally out of keeping, the site is small, the increased density of properties resulting would spoil the general amenity of the area. It overlooks two properties and will be too close to sycamore trees. Councillor J. Hobbley stated that while he liked the design overall, the property is large for the plot of land, the gates are particularly inappropriate, and voiced a concern for ambulances and emergency vehicles if they were blocked. Councillor K. Hobbley stated the design is modern and contemporary and not in keeping with the other properties. Following the discussion, the Chair requested a vote on the proposal put forward that the Council should object to this planning proposal. A vote took place and was unanimously carried (11) with one abstention. **Action: Clerk to notify Planning Officer.** Councillors Bailey and Atkinson re-joined the meeting.

- 808. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD 7<sup>th</sup> of January 2021:** The Minutes of the Council meetings held on the 7<sup>th</sup> of January 2021 were **APPROVED** as an accurate record.
- 809. MATTERS ARISING AND UPDATES FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES:** There were no matters arising.
- 810. ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING:** The Clerk advised on completed and outstanding matters from previous meetings.
- 811. CRIME FIGURE REPORT AND POLICING MATTERS:** PCSO Sue Lawrence had submitted a report on current issues which had been circulated prior to the meeting. Issues arising included fly tipping, including discarded gas cannisters. A discussion took place about recent parking issues stemming from Maes Y Pant referred to in the report. It was stated that there was a need to ask the PCSO's to patrol this area. Councillor Atkinson suggested a note of thanks be sent to the PCSO's for their efforts in patrolling the area in recent times, and advised of additional yellow lines put forward for the road near Maes y Pant, clarifying this was due to road safety issues generally and not specifically related to the wider popularity of Maes y Pant, suggesting that Social media had highlighted the amenity. He suggested the need for the Community Council to work closely with Maes y Pant in the future, and the need to encourage people to walk rather than drive for their exercise. A discussion took place, during which concerns were raised about the level of parking, and the possibility of the Community Centre being approached was suggested. Councillor Edwards suggested a need to take up with Highways the reasons for the Community Council no longer being consulted on proposals for yellow lines. **Action AGREED: Clerk will write to Highways.**
- 812. TO CONSIDER NORTH WALES POLICE REQUEST TO PROVIDE £500-£1000 TO PURCHASE A MENU OF TARGET HARDENING ITEMS:** Councillor Harriman introduced discussion and stated that he wished to formally move that a payment of £1000k be made to the North Wales Police as they had previously requested, for the purchase of a suite of target hardening equipment. Councillor B. Blackmore seconded the proposal. It was suggested and **AGREED** that this be considered as a budget amount set aside as being up to £1000 and a report to be produced at the year end. A vote took place on the amendment to the proposal, all were in favour (14), and it was **RESOLVED** to spend up to £1000 towards Target hardening measures. **Action: Clerk to liaise with North Wales Police over purchase of the items.**
- 813. COMMUNITY AGENT'S REPORT:** The Community Agent Mrs R. Thompson, attended and presented her report. The Chair thanked her for the report, and for her work, stating it was heartening to see that people are now contacting her for support. In answer to a concern raised by Councillor Harriman, the Clerk and Chair both confirmed they had no connection issues and could see and count all the votes taking place. Mrs Thompson advised that she has been trying to contact people, but COVID restrictions have been challenging. A discussion took place about those over 80 not receiving a vaccine. Mrs Thompson said she would contact the Practice Manager. Councillor B. Blackmore highlighted an initiative by Rofft School and will liaise with RT. Initiatives highlighted in the report included the Community Catalyst and the Dementia Friendly village scheme. Councillors confirmed they would support this being taken forward. Mrs R. Thompson left the meeting.
- 814. TO RECEIVE UPDATES ON ONGOING MATTERS:**
- i. Clappers Lane flooding: - It was reported that flooding in this location has once again been bad. There appears to be an issue with WCBC being unable to siphon off the flooding, the reason for

which isn't clear. Councillor Bailey suggested a letter be sent to the Assembly member and to WCBC asking for clarification on the policy. Councillor Atkinson spoke on the recent flooding events and County Council priorities during this time. He stated drain clearance is now being done in a systematic way and suggested a list could be drawn up by the Clerk identifying where the drainage issues are occurring to help with identification. Councillor Holmes requested WCBC be notified that their reporting of flooding on WCBC website is not easy to navigate.

- ii. High Street Gresford: - The Clerk advised that the meeting with the Highways Manager WCBC is still outstanding, initially due to absence and currently due to restrictions.
- iii. Marford Play Area: - A report is due to go to Executive Board on the 9<sup>th</sup> of February concerning the lease. The Clerk advised of the request to confirm responsibility for boundaries that had been received. Councillor Holmes proposed that responsibility for the boundaries would form part of the lease, provided it is first brought up to a good standard, and this was seconded by Councillor Bailey and **AGREED**. Councillor Atkinson declared his interest in this matter as a Borough Councillor. The Clerk confirmed that the tree report has been requested. The Chair advised of a request received on behalf of a class at Rofft school to plant a commemorative tree at Marford Play Area in remembrance of a child who had sadly passed away. After discussion it was **AGREED** to grant this request but to contact WCBC as the lease is not yet in place, , and t to ensure the correct location and protection for the sapling. **Action: Clerk to contact WCBC, Sergeant Davies and enquire about the family's knowledge.**
- iv. Gresford Health Centre: - Councillor Holmes advised the meeting of the issues raised with Alyn Family doctors at the online meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup> of January. Overall, it was felt to have been a positive meeting, and the pressures that AFD are under are acknowledged. Councillors requested a copy of the notes of the meeting. Notices concerning scams have been forwarded by AFD for display in the Council noticeboard. A discussion took place on the issue of directional signage which had been raised. Councillor Dutton temporarily left the meeting due to technical difficulties and Councillor Merry took over as Chair. Councillor Harriman proposed writing to the Health Board as they should meet the costs of additional signage. A discussion took place about the telephone system. Councillors K. Hobbley, Jones and Edwards stated, at times it was very slow in getting through at other times very quick. AFD had advised of the pressures caused by volume of calls. It had been stated that meetings were useful and should take place quarterly. **Action: Clerk to write to BCUHB over signage.**

**815. COVID-19 – ANY ISSUES ARISING OR REQUESTS FOR SUPPORT RECEIVED:** There were no issues arising.

**816. SPEEDING CONCERNS GRESFORD AND MARFORD:** A discussion took place about concerns of speeding in various locations. Councillor Atkinson raised the issue of traffic surveys needing to be requested for areas of concern to obtain data. He proposed that this be put on the March Agenda to agree places of concern and expenditure for road surveys. He also advised of the need to write to Welsh Government to raise concerns. Councillor Edwards suggested that Community Speedwatch could be relaunched once COVID restrictions are relaxed. Councillor Hobbley requested that the issue of speed signs be relooked at on a future agenda. Councillor Bailey suggested request for volunteers in Essentials for the future.

**817. FINANCE COMMITTEE:** Councillor Edwards as Chair of the Finance Committee presented the minutes of the Finance Committee held on the 8<sup>th</sup> of January 2021 and these were noted. The report on Income and expenditure at Quarter 3, recommended to the meeting by the Finance Committee, was **APPROVED**. Councillor Edwards presented the Grant Applications and recommendation for awards from the Finance Committee for Approval. It was noted that the payment to the All-Saints Church, approved by Committee at their meeting, needed to be revisited. The Clerk advised that further confirmation had been received on the current legislation on payments to the Church in Wales, and although it appears that some Community Councils do give payments to Churches, the legislation technically prohibits this. Following discussion, Councillor Wilde proposed that it be paid. An amendment was proposed by Councillor Harriman, to not pay the sum at this time but to defer it to the next meeting for further consideration. This was **AGREED**. Otherwise, the payments to other Grant Applicants as tabled, were **APPROVED**. **Action: Clerk to put item on the next agenda.** The appointment of JDH as Internal Auditor for the 2020-21 Audit was **APPROVED**.

**818. GENERAL AMENITIES COMMITTEE:** Councillor J. Holmes presented the meeting with the minutes of the recent meeting held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of February 2021, and these were **Noted**. Councillor Holmes advised the meeting of quotes obtained, firstly in respect of the perimeter fence requiring repair for safety grounds, and secondly for the stabilising of the path surface at the top of Allington park. The Clerk clarified the figures for expenditure that had been considered and were recommended by the Committee. A discussion took place about the fact that the figures did not appear on the agenda. There was no clear

agreement, and the Clerk will carry these items forward to the next agenda on the 4<sup>th</sup> of March. Councillor Holmes also presented an item for approval on the renewal of the SLA with Wrexham County Borough Council for the inspection of the play areas. After discussion it was clarified that the agreement did include inspection for glass and sharp objects and their removal., and removal of litter and minor maintenance. Committee had recommended the renewal of the agreement. No clear agreement was reached, and the Clerk will carry the item forward for inclusion on the next agenda 4<sup>th</sup> of March. Councillor Holmes also advised of the issue that had been raised previously and which had been considered by General Amenities Committee concerning the raising of the seat by Marford Noticeboard. Councillor K. Hobbley advised the seat is needed for people to rest at the top of Pant Lane. It was AGREED that the seat is needed but could be better sited. Councillor Jones stated that the Community needs to be consulted on the matter.

- 819. DRAFT COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE FOR CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION:** After a brief discussion it was proposed and AGREED to adopt this policy in principle, and that it be referred to Finance Committee for more detailed consideration for any amendments or additions required.
- 820. FORMAL COMPLAINT RECEIVED:** This item, which concerned a Planning matter in relation to P/2020/0241 was deferred to the end of the meeting to be discussed under Part 2 arrangements, given that there might be Data protection issues regarding the complainant. Councillor Bailey moved to extend the meeting beyond the two and a half hours within Standing Orders. AGREED.
- 821. REPORTS FROM BOROUGH COUNCILLORS:** The report provided by Councillor Atkinson was considered and accepted. MH expressed gratitude for his work done with Highways to ensure that resurfacing of roads is carried out but raised the issue of the poor quality of workmanship. **Action: Clerk to raise issue with Highways.**
- 822. FINANCE:** i. The following items of expenditure for February 2021 were proposed and **APPROVED** for payment.

Date	Payment To	Reason	Amount
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>			
4.2.21	HMRC	Monthly amount due	
4.2.21	Ruth Thompson	NJC Salary and expenses	
4.2.21	Serena Baxter	NJC Salary and expenses	
4.2.21	Clwyd Pension fund	Monthly amount due	
4.2.21	Michelle Jones	NJC Salary and expenses	
4.2.21	Steve Pugh	Gravedigging services	550.00
4.2.21	WCBC	Half yearly payment for inspection of play areas SLA	3056.10
4.2.21	ICCM	Training costs	162.00
4.2.21	Gresford Royal British legion	Cost of Remembrance Wreath	25.00
4.2.21	PeopleSafe	Quarterly billing for safety monitoring	48.60
4.2.21	Planning Aid Wales	Training costs	135.00
4.2.21	MEGA electrical	Quarterly Maintenance and repair	903.92
4.2.21	BT	Monthly contract CCTV	55.20
2.2.21	Vodafone	Monthly contract three phones Employees	35.03

- ii. Approval was granted for items 18 ii, iii, and iv on the agenda, being for £135 for a course for the Clerk in Cemetery Management, and amount of £657.99 for a replacement laptop for the Clerk, and an amount of £166.50 for the Clerk to purchase two publications from the SLCC. The Chair thanked the Chair of Finance Councillor Edwards for his secondary checking of accounts and payments and thanked the Clerk for her work concerning Council Finances.

**823. APPLICATIONS RECEIVED UNDER THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED):**

- i. P/2020/0902: Works to trees in Gresford Conservation Area- crown raise Walnut tree, reduce the regrowth of purple plum and dismantle and section fell the Ash tree and poison stump- Pistyll Bank, Springfield Lane, Marford, Wrexham. No objections were raised, provided the advice of the Arboricultural Officer is followed.

- ii. P/2020 /0841: Single storey front, side and rear extensions and new roof Midlake house Hillock lane Gresford Wrexham: Councillors A. Merry, J. Dutton, A. Atkinson and MJ Edwards declared interests in this matter and took no part in the discussion. It was noted that the matter had been brought to the last meeting of the Council on 7<sup>th</sup> of January, when no objection had been raised. However, it had subsequently been noted that further Planning papers were submitted after the Council met on the 7<sup>th</sup> of January, and representations had been received from neighbouring properties. For this reason, it was determined, following advice sought, that not all relevant information had been available to Councillor on the 7<sup>th</sup> of January and was not made available until the 12<sup>th</sup> of January. Councillor Bailey proposed that the proposal was overbearing and out of scale and appeared to exceed the percentage rule on extensions as to how much of an extension can be allowed on an existing building. The current proposal would encroach too severely on the neighbouring property and for these reasons it was proposed that the Council object to this Planning proposal. A discussion took place, and a vote was taken, Councillor K. Hobbley abstained. The vote was carried (9) in favour of the objection. **Action: Clerk to notify the Planning Officer. Councillors declaring re-joined the meeting.**
- iii. P/2021/0025: Demolition of Garage and Two storey side extension- 14 Mayflower Drive Marford, Wrexham: No objections were raised.
- iv. P/2021/0036: Part Alteration to Ground floor and first floor extension- Romsey, Marford, Wrexham: No objections were raised.
- v. P/2021/0006: Single storey rear extension- Kilhendre, Old Wrexham Road, Gresford, Wrexham: Councillor Atkinson declared an interest and left the meeting. No objections were raised.

**824. MEMBER’S URGENT ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Councillor Holmes and the Clerk advised of annual treatment and verti- draining works being required to Allington Park this year. Quotes will need to be obtained and brought to back to the Council for approval in March. If the same contractor is used as the Gresford Trust, there may be potential for cost savings. **Action Clerk to obtain quotes and agenda item for the 4<sup>th</sup> of March meeting.** Councillor J. Hobbley requested a specific item on the agenda for the 4<sup>th</sup> of March meeting to consider electronic road signs and traffic surveys. Councillor Bailey moved the Standing Orders in relation to the timing of the meeting. This was AGREED.

**825. CORRESPONDENCE:** Items of correspondence were tabled in a report for the month of January 2021 and were **NOTED**. Councillor Edwards highlighted that information had now come through from Unity Trust bank and that those on the mandate would be able to view the accounts online.

**826. DATE, VENUE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING:** The next meeting will be held on the **4<sup>th</sup> of March 2021, at 6.30 p.m.** and will be held **remotely**.

**COUNCILLOR J. Dutton**

**CHAIR** ..... **DATE**.....

*i)This meeting took place remotely, using ‘Go To’ Meetings software, under The Local Authorities (Coronavirus)(Meetings)(Wales) Regulations 2020. which make provision for meetings to take place remotely.*

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<sup>i</sup>It is, therefore, recommended that the press and public be excluded from the Meeting during consideration of the following item as it is likely that, if they were present, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).