Cyngor Dinas Llanelwy St Asaph City Council

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting of St Asaph City Council held on Wednesday 14th June 2023 at 6.45 pm at the Council & Community Meeting Room and also with remote attendance via Zoom.

Present: Cllrs J Ellison, M Gedd, L Griffiths, L Groves, C A Hardie (Mayor), M J Hogg, G Jones, P G Morton, L Nelson, J O Roberts, P Scott (Deputy Mayor) and R Williams.

6.45 pm **Presentation from Cllr Groves and a representative of STAND**

Cllr Hardie welcomed all to the meeting and thanked Cllr Groves and the representative of STAND for attending.

STAND has conducted a survey regarding accessibility of play areas in Denbighshire, which they hope will be a first step to make play areas more accessible and inclusive. Denbighshire are looking at making improvements to their play areas in Prestatyn and Ruthin. In response to questions, it was established:

- There is no local accessible play area. A facility in Tamworth was discussed.
- Gwynt y Môr may be a source of funding.

Cllr Hardie thanked both presenters and confirmed that this issue could be discussed at a future Council meeting.

7.00pm **The representative of STAND left the chamber.**

2023/101 Apologies for Absence

- None

2023/102 Declarations of Interest

- Cllr Roberts declared a personal and prejudicial interest in item 20 as he is the Vice-Chairman and Treasurer of the Football Club;
- Cllr Gedd declared a personal interest in item 21 as he is a member of the Conservative Club;
- Cllr Jones declared a personal and prejudicial interest in item 21 as he is a Trustee of the Conservative Club.

2023/103 Public Participation

- Three members of the public were present, one of whom had left the chamber at 7 pm.

Two members of the public addressed the Council regarding the following proposals:

- To paint two benches – outside the Cathedral and outside the Parish Church, which could be painted in a design based on what the Council would wish. The cost of painting the benches is in the region of £400 each.
- To paint a mural in the bus shelter opposite the Cathedral. The artist would request £100-£150 for materials and would donate her time.

The members of the public left the chamber.

2023/104 North Wales Police

PCSO Dave Jones gave his report:

- There has been less anti-social behaviour;
- Two incidents of theft of a wallet. Reminder to all residents to watch their personal possessions.
- Online fraud cases continue;
- A number of dangerous dog incidents;
- Safety concerns re: gatherings under the Elwy bridge;
- Physical altercations;

- Reports of a person acting suspiciously near the riverside.

Councillors raised issues about damage to railings on the High Street and the fence at the end of Mill Race Meadow.

Cllr Hardie explained that, together with Cllr Williams and the Clerk, he had met with the PCSO to discuss the riverside area. Apart from traces of fires, the area was in quite good order.

The PCSO left the meeting.

2023/105 Mayor's Report

The Mayor, Cllr Hardie, gave his report after an extremely busy month:

- Attended three Mayors' civic events;
- Met with the army twice to discuss the arrangements for the Freedom of the City;
- Together with the Clerk had met with North Wales Ambulance Service to discuss defibrillators;
- Together with Cllr Williams and the Clerk, had met with the PCSO to discuss the riverside area;
- Attended the Environment & Assets Committee, Policy, Resources & Finance Committee and the City Plan Working Group meetings;
- Attended the Freedom of the City Steering Group meeting;
- Attended a motorbike show at the New Inn.

Cllr Gedd remarked that the Cricket Club have a defibrillator.

2023/106 County Councillors' Reports

Cllr Hogg

- Dealing with issues surrounding wind farms. Together with County Cllrs Scott and Elson, met with Denbighshire to keep track of these developments;
- Attended a Strategy meeting, where NHS dentists were discussed;
- Attended Scrutiny re: improving rural broadband;
- Attended Denbighshire's Climate Change and Ecological Survey Group;
- Attended Democratic Services re: Public Participation Strategy;
- Dealing with drainage issues at the Castle Green site;
- Making enquiries re: windfarm compensation for residents;
- Elwy MAG continues to consider footpaths.

Cllr Scott

- Attended Sense Denbigh as Vice-Chairman of Denbighshire;
- Attended the same meetings outlined by Cllr Hogg;
- Attended Assets Capital Scrutiny Committee. Funds are through for Green-gates Farm East;
- Another project at Glan Elwy is under consideration;
- Has a map of the cables for the windfarms.

Questions were asked regarding the biodiversity projects.

2023/107 Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting 10th May 2023 were discussed regarding accuracy (circulated prior to the meeting).

Resolved to approve the minutes of 10th May 2023 as an accurate record.

2023/108 Matters Arising

- None

2023/109 Financial management

a) The payment schedule was reviewed:

- Zurich Municipal payment £2806-67 is the annual premium for the Council's insurance. This was considered by the Environment & Assets Committee;

- Clerk's wages include 31.5 hours for Freedom of the City and 15 hours for Audit;
- Clerk's expenses include £707 for events costs. Neither the photographer nor the First-aider would accept cheques, so the Clerk paid these items from her personal account;
- Payment to Glascoed Timber £4692-00 covers two months grass cutting and litter bin servicing. Also includes £628 for purchase and installation of a new bin;
- Scottish Power £265-69 – this should have been claimed by direct debit. Scottish Power investigating;
- Ash Waste £560-40. Query raised re: excess waste charges as the company had failed to collect the waste on 4th May. The contract has now been amended to give the Council more favourable waste allowances. Credit note of approximately £160 & VAT to be applied to the next invoice.

Resolved to approve the Payments Schedule, total value £14,055.96.

b) The Finance report was discussed:

- VAT claim £1167 has been made covering April and May – funds awaited;
- External Audit has been prepared. Statements to 31st July 2023 are to be included when received;
- Scottish Power bill for the football pavilion was over-estimated by £3000. Refund of credit balance requested.
  Options re: a smart meter and change of supplier were discussed;
- The Clerk had received confirmation from Denbighshire that the technical difficulties at the December 2023 Council meeting were due to problems at the St Asaph Exchange. The schools and leisure centre in St Asaph had had the same issues.
- The Clerk advised that internet banking would have assisted with a number of issues, such as payments to suppliers who no longer accept cheques and obtaining copy statements for audit in a timely manner. Unity bank now offer the security measures recommended. Requested that this be considered by the Policy Resources & Finance Committee later in the year, once the updated model Financial Regulations have been received from One Voice Wales.

Resolved to approve and accept the finance report.

c) The Direct Debit Schedule was considered. This had been updated to include the direct debit for Ash Waste Ltd.

Resolved to approve the direct debit schedule.

2023/110 Planning Applications

a) Application: 46/2023/0322
Location: Bod Haulog The Roe, St Asaph
Proposal: Variation of condition no. 17 of outline permission code no. 46/2019/0806 to allow alterations to ground levels on site
Resolved that the Clerk should advise Planning Department that the City Council has no objections to this application.

b) Mona Offshore Wind Project
Letter from EnBW re Statutory Consultation 23 May to 20 June
Cllr Griffiths' draft objection to the proposal, which was circulated prior to the meeting, was discussed.
Resolved the Clerk is to respond to the consultation, in accordance with the draft response considered with one amendment.

c) Application: 46/2023/0342
Location: 38 Llys Dyffryn, St Asaph
Proposal: Reduction and removal of lower lateral limb of 1 no. Poplar tree subject to Tree Preservation Order no. 2/36/1988 (T4)
Resolved that the Clerk should advise Planning Department that the City Council

has no objections to this application.

d) **Application: 46/2023/0348**
Location: St Asaph Infants Upper Denbigh Road, St Asaph
Proposal: Replace 3 external doors, formation of 2 external door openings, access ramps and associated works (Listed Building Application)
Resolved that the Clerk should advise Planning Department that the City Council has no objections to this application.

e) **Application: 46/2023/0341**
Location: Mounty Hey Mount Road, St Asaph
Proposal: Removal of overhanging dead branches of 3 no. Oak trees subject to Tree Preservation Order no. 2-1993 (T1, T2, T3)
Resolved that the Clerk should advise Planning Department that the City Council has no objections to this application.

2023/111 External Organisations and Outside Bodies

Further to the Annual Meeting, further consideration was given to the Council's representatives on Outside Bodies.

- **Resolved that Cllr Hogg is to be appointed as the Council's representative on the Afon Elwy Environment Group. This is in addition to Cllr Hardie.**
- **Resolved that the Clerk is to write to Mrs Rust to enquire whether she would be prepared to continue as the Council's representative on the St Asaph Library Committee and the Elizabeth Williams Waen Charity.**

The Clerk is to request contact details for the Library Committee, on behalf of Cllr Nelson, who has also been appointed as the Council's representative,

2023/112 Councillor Allowances for Senior Roles

At the May Annual Meeting, Senior Role payments had been authorised to the Chairs of three Committees and the Health & Safety and Tree Officer roles. A maximum of three payments can be made. The five qualifying roles are filled by two members – Cllrs Gedd and Hardie.

Resolved to award the following Senior Roles payments:

- **£500 to Cllr Gedd (Tree Officer and Chairman of the Environment & Assets Committee and Policy Resources & Finance Committee);**
- **£500 to Cllr Hardie (Health & Safety Officer and Chairman of the Events Committee).**

The Deputy Mayor's allowance was approved at the Annual Meeting.

2023/113 Defibrillators

The Mayor and the Clerk had met with a representative of the North wales Ambulance Service to discuss defibrillator provision for St Asaph. The Rotary Club of St Asaph had donated funds of £2500 to the City Council for this purpose. The Clerk's report outlining the advice received had been circulated to Council with the meeting papers.

Resolved that the Clerk should instruct North Wales Ambulance Service to have defibrillators installed, at a cost of £1500 each at the following locations:

- **On the external wall of the Diocesan Office on the High Street;**
- **On the external wall of the New Inn.**

Cllr Hogg will liaise with the developers at the HM Stanley site to request that they consider installing a defibrillator for the community.

2023/114 Environment & Assets Committee

a) **Resolved to receive and approve the minutes of the meeting of the Environment & Assets Committee on 7th June 2023.**

b) **Resolved to approve the recommendations of the Committee as follows:**

i.	To appoint Cllr Williams to the City Plan Working Group.

ii.	To approve the insurance renewal premium of £2806-67. This is the second year of a five-year deal and includes flood cover. Level of cover has been amended throughout the year as new assets have been purchased.
iii.	• To approve and accept the quotation of £700 & VAT from T&C Kelly . • This expenditure is to be considered for the cash flow by the Policy Resources and Finance Committee.
iv.	• To approve the donation of the beds, trellis and compost bin to plot-holders on the allotments; • To instruct the Clerk to offer the 2 no. water bowsers for sale at £300 each via the Council Clerks' groups. Lower offers are to be referred to the Mayor and Deputy Mayor before accepting.

c) The proposal for the benches and bus shelter had been discussed during public participation.

Resolved to grant permission for 2 no. Council benches to be painted, subject to funding being sought outside the Council;
Resolved to approve the painting of a mural in the bus shelter opposite the Cathedral at a cost of £100 to £150 (materials only).
Resolved the Clerk is to write to the members of the public to confirm permission for the project on these terms.

d) The Clerk will e-mail all councillors re: the date of the Assets inspection.

2023/115 Policy, Resources & Finance Committee

a) Resolved to receive and approve the minutes of the meeting of the Policy Resources & Finance Committee on 13th June 2023.

b) Resolved to approve the recommendations of the Committee as follows:

i.	To approve and adopt the Reserves Policy; To accept the recommendations of the Clerk as regards the level of reserves. The Clerk stated that Council should aim to keep at least £50,000-£60,000 in general reserves in view of the landholdings, and other assets the Council owns and manages.
ii.	• To instruct the Clerk to have 1 no. litter bin relocated from the corner of Heol Esgob and The Roe to opposite Londis; • To donate the same litter bin to Denbighshire County Council; • That the Clerk should write to Glascoed Timber to amend the contract pricing once the bin has been adopted by Denbighshire.
iii.	• To approve and adopt the Health & Safety Plan for 2023-2024. • The Clerk is to place the relevant health & safety tasks on the agendas of the Environment & Assets and Events Committees.
iv.	To approve and adopt the new Advertising Signs Policy with the following amendment: 4.2 Applications should be made in writing to the Clerk and applications should be dealt with under the Clerk's delegated authority, after consultation with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor for a sign which: a. Is no more than 200 cm by100 cm; b. Is to be made of plastic, metal or dibond; c. Is to be located within the curtilage of the land covered by a current land use agreement; d. Is not a digital sign; e. May be for temporary display (e.g. events) Consideration of the application will include the wording, design and nature of the business advertised. Any application not authorised by the Clerk will be referred to the next available Council meeting for a decision.

	• To approve an amendment to the Delegation Scheme to reflect this change.
v.	To approve and accept the amended Policy Review Schedule.
vi.	To approve and adopt the amended Standing Orders.

2023/116 Annual Report

The draft annual report for 2022-2023 was considered. This outlines the Council's activities over the financial year.

Resolved to approve the annual report and authorise its publication on the website.

2023/117 Internal Control

The Clerk stated that Councillors had received the draft Annual Return for 2022/2023 two weeks prior to the meeting. This item and the following two covers the statements made on the second page, which the Council is asked to consider.

The Internal Control procedures were reviewed for 2023-2024

Resolved to review and approve the internal control procedures for 2023-2024.

2023/118 Internal Audit Report

a) Following completion of the internal audit for 2022-2023, the Council considered the auditor's report.

Resolved to receive and approve the Internal Auditor's report following the 2022-2023 internal audit.

b) The action plan to address the issues identified was considered. This consisted of two items, which have both been addressed. The Reserves Policy was approved in 2023/115 i, however reserves will need to be built up over two years ending 2025 – 2026.

Resolved to approve and adopt the action plan relating to the Internal Auditor's report.

2023/119 Annual Statement of Accounts and Annual Governance statement

The annual statement of Accounts for 2022-2023, together with the bank reconciliation and the Annual Governance Statement and Annual return for 2022-2023 had been circulated to all councillors two weeks prior to the meeting.

Following completion of the Internal Audit:

a) Resolved to approve the Annual Statement of Accounts and the Bank Reconciliation for 2022-2023.

b) Resolved to approve the Annual Governance Statement for 2022-2023.

c) Resolved to approve the Annual Statement for 2022-2023.

Resolved to approve that the Mayor authorise the documents in a) b) & c).

2023/120 Football Club

a) Cllr Roberts gave an update on the 2022-2023 season. The Club is establishing an under 19 team to provide progression between the junior and senior teams. The first team has had a very successful season and have regained promotion to tier 3.

b) Cllr Roberts explained that the Club wish to deter animals from the pitch area as it has health & safety concerns re: animal faeces on the pitch, out of control dogs rushing at children, and children swinging on the uprights. At present there is open fencing around the pitch, which does not prevent animals straying onto the pitch. The Club would like to fill the fencing to a height of 30 inches. People would still be able to walk on the pitch when it is not in use. The Football Club will fund the fence and will submit samples of the proposed panels to Council for approval.

There was a full discussion of the following issues:

- Concerns re: the aesthetic difference presented by installing the panels;

- Weighing up the balance between deterring dogs from entering the pitch area, and all the surrounding health & safety aspects, with the original intention of the deed of gift.
- The deed of gift refers to the land being gifted for a public pleasure ground;
- The Council paid to put a pitch and pavilion there in 1972;
- Whether the fencing could be removed between seasons or for events, such as the gala.

Resolved to grant permission to the Football Club to install fencing panels between the hurdles, at its own cost. Samples of the panels are to be shown to Council for it to approve the colour.

2023/121 Land on the High Street

Cllrs Gedd and Jones, having declared an interest in this item, did not take part in the debate for this item.

Letter received from the Conservative Club requesting permission from the Council to access the Club's property via the Council's land on the High Street. The Club would like to make an opening in the Club's wall and install a gateway for this purpose.

Resolved to grant permission to the Club to access its property over the City Council's land on the High Street. Cllr Hardie will meet with representatives of the Club to agree exactly where the opening will be and to agree any impact on the Council's planters.

Resolved the Clerk is to write to the Club to advise it of the Council's decision.

2023/122 Freedom of the City

a) Cllr Hardie reported that the arrangements for the event are all in hand. The event will start at the Cathedral, followed by a march down the High Street and a service at the Cathedral, followed by refreshments.

b) A summary of the budget for the event was considered by Council The Council were committed to using Denbighshire's in house caterers as it was using the leisure centre. This had had an impact on costs. Denbighshire had offered free venue hire and a discount on drinks as its contribution to the event.

Resolved to approve the budget for the Freedom of the City Event, total costs £5835.

2023/123 Correspondence

a) E-mail from Co-options re: litter picking
Councillors are to write to the Clerk if they have any suggestions for employing another Co-options member.

b) E-mail from a resident re: Former Abbeyfields site
The City Council has no information. Cllr Hogg will make enquiries and reply to the resident.

Resolved that the Clerk is to write to the resident to advise that Cllr Hogg will write further on the City Council's behalf.

The meeting concluded at 9.10 pm

Date of Next Meeting

Meeting in person and with remote attendance held 12th July 2023.

Signed ……
Chairman of the Full Council 12th July 2023