

At the hybrid **MEETING of COUNCIL** held on Wednesday 17th January 2024, commencing at 6.00pm.

PRESENT

Councillor Ms J. L. McAlpine (Mayor)

Councillors Mrs M. A. Blakeley-Walker, Mrs J. Chamberlain-Jones, Mrs E. M. Chard, Mrs J. M. Evans, S. Feeney, A. R. James, K. R. Jones (at 6.35pm), Mrs D. L. King, Mrs W. M. Mullen-James, Ms R. S. Roberts, Miss S. L. Roberts, Ms V. Roberts, A. J. Rutherford, D. Simmons, A. Walker and Miss C. L. Williams.

Mr G. J. Nickels – Town Clerk
Miss H. J. Windus – Deputy Clerk

107. OPENING OF MEETING & APOLOGIES

The Mayor's Chaplain, Reverend Helen Gheorghiu Gould, commenced proceedings by leading all those wishing to take part, in prayer, and included the recent passing of Councillor Mrs J. Butterfield JP MBE's brother, extending hers and the Town Council's sympathy to the family.

Apologies for absence were submitted by Councillors M. Blackwell, Mrs J. Butterfield JP MBE and Miss S. Fleming.

108. MINUTES

The minutes of the following meeting of council and committee were submitted for approval as a correct record:

Meeting of Council - 20th December 2023 - Min. Nos. 88-103

Proposed by Councillor Ms J. L. McAlpine and seconded by Councillor A. R. James and **RESOLVED** as a correct record.

Planning Committee - 20th December 2023 - Min. Nos. 33-36

Proposed by Councillor Ms J. L. McAlpine and seconded by Councillor D. Simmons and **RESOLVED** as a correct record.

109. PRESENTATION: DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL (DCC) – PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDER (PSPO)

The Mayor welcomed Councillor Rhys Thomas (Lead Member for Housing and Communities), Ms Helen Vaughan-Evans (Head of Corporate Support Service - Performance, Digital and Assets) and Ms Joanne Douglass (Lead Project Manager) to the meeting and invited them to address members.

Councillor Thomas thanked the Town Council for fitting them on to its agenda and briefly advised that PSPOs only lasts three years and with the last one applied to this area coming to an end in October 2023.

That PSPOs require a partnership between North Wales Police (NWP) and DCC to work effectively and that DCC Legal Officers requested evidence from NWP of the need for another one for Rhyl Town Centre, which has now been provided and has passed the legal conditions to warrant a further Order.

It is a legal requirement for a three-month consultation period to be held, which is underway and ends at midnight on 21st January 2024.

Consultation responses will be considered at a meeting next week and progress will be made from there.

Ms Vaughan-Evans advised that PSPOs were a tool used by the Police to tackle anti-social behaviour within an identified area, but that the legislation requires that the body to put a PSPO in place is the Local Authority.

A map of the boundary of the proposed Order was shown on screen and Ms Vaughan-Evans explained that there was a suggestion for the Marine Lake area to be included, but that there was not enough evidence to support this.

That behaviour considered to be anti-social was that causing nuisance, alarm or harassment to a person, group of people and/or a property.

The PSPO would also enable street drinking to be addressed, which was the consumption of alcohol from any type of container in a public place.

To capture the Town Council's comments as part of the consultation, Mr Vaughan-Evans put the consultation questions to members for a collective response, but encouraged individual members to submit their own comments as well.

Do you agree that DCC and NWP should seek to introduce a PSPO for Rhyl Town Centre for a maximum of three years, until 2027?

Members agreed that a PSPO was needed.

Do you agree that if introduced the proposed PSPO should include powers to deal with anti-social behaviour and street drinking?

Members agreed that powers to deal with both were necessary.

If the proposed PSPO was to go ahead, do you agree with the proposed boundaries for the restricted area?

Members agreed with the proposed boundary, but felt it should be extended.

A councillor was surprised that the Marine Lake area had not been included as they were aware of fairly regular problems of anti-social behaviour there?

Ms Vaughan-Evans said that NWP produced crime hotspot maps and that the Marine Lake area was not showing as a particular problem area, which is why it hadn't been included.

Another councillor asked if the South West area of Rhyl might be included due to pretty much daily use of motorbikes riding on and off pavements at speed, without lights, without safety gear and behaving in a menacing way and with no thought to pedestrians. They also race around the woodland by Marsh Tracks despite DCC erecting barriers to prevent vehicular access.

Ms Vaughan-Evans said that all feedback received tonight would be captured and asked councillors to encourage residents to report this behaviour and irresponsible users of e-scooters to the Police to make sure it makes their figures.

In response to a councillor reporting the vandalising of a noticeboard at Marine Lake, Councillor Thomas said he would raise this at the next meeting of the CCTV Partnership Board to strengthen the argument for CCTV coverage there.

A councillor asked what kind of support was offered to those with drug and alcohol addiction problems being dispersed by the Police?

Ms Vaughan-Evans advised that an asset mapping exercise was carried out as part of the process to determine whether a new PSPO was required, and that in relation to street drinking there were a number of interventions on offer to engage with the individuals and making referrals to relevant organisations and council departments to offer support.

Councillor Thomas suggested that the dispersal of people by the Police and the level of engagement and signposting carried out by them would be a good question to ask at the next meeting of the Rhyl Community Safety Partnership, that the Police attend.

Ms Vaughan-Evans added that a PSPO was not an end, more of a beginning with regard to tackling anti-social behaviour at its root and was a tool to be used for an inter-departmental and multi-agency approach to a complex problem.

A councillor asked if the evidential information referred to, as provided by the Police, was accessible to the public or to councillors?

Ms Vaughan-Evans advised that it was not, due to the sensitive nature of the information, and was only shared with DCC's legal representatives to meet the legal challenge.

In response to a question on dog fouling and whether this was considered as anti-social and therefore part of the PSPO's remit, Ms Vaughan-Evans advised that it did not.

Councillor Mrs W. M. Mullen-James said that this was a Public Protection matter, which was part of her Cabinet portfolio and she would find out what the position was in terms of how dog-fouling was being addressed.

Ms Vaughan-Evans advised that all the signs were positive for the PSPO to be made, and that if that is the case, then the Order would be introduced, promoted and all signage would be up by the end of February 2024.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Thomas, Ms Vaughan-Evans and Ms J. Douglass for their attendance.

110. MAYOR'S REPORT

The Mayor submitted details of events attended by herself and the Deputy Mayor over the past month (copy circulated with agenda) which were the RNLI Boxing Day Dip event that the Mayor had served hot drinks and biscuits to the 'dippers' at, and the 'Storm in a Teacup' charity café launch at Ffordd Las Community Centre, that promised to be a great community asset.

RESOLVED that the report was received.

111. PRESENTATION: RECORD OF YEARS IN OFFICE

On the Town Council's behalf, the Mayor presented Councillor Mrs D. L. King with a record of her two years as Mayor from 2021 to 2023 and thanked her for her service.

112. PAYMENTS AND RECEIPTS REPORT (SCHEDULE A)

The Mayor referred to the Town Clerk's report (circulated with agenda) detailing the schedule of payments made and income received.

Voucher No.	Supplier name	Amount	Description of Goods & Services
1526	Tesco	3.00	Mobile phone insurance - HW
1745	BT	271.12	Telephone & Broadband lines
1526	Tesco	12.99	Mobile phone charges – HW
1740	HSBC	8.00	Bank charges
1748	HSBC	32.00	Annual Card Fee
1658	Benefits Advice	1,166.67	Appeals Officer 23/24 – payment 9 of 12
1745	HMRC	2,983.31	PAYE deductions Nov 2023
1746	Clwyd Pension Fund	4,737.10	Pension deductions & deficit funding – Nov 2023
1747	RTC staff	10,710.95	Net Pay for Dec 2023 including back-dated pay award
1617	Denbighshire CC	753.00	NNDR WRCC Civic Offices 2023/24 – payment 9 of 10
1539	Tesco	3.00	Mobile phone insurance – GN
1539	Tesco	12.99	Mobile phone charges – GN
1659	Citizen's Advice Bureau	2,000.00	Energy Efficiency Officer – payment 3 of 4
	Total payments	£22,694.13	

Category	Description	Amount
Santander	Interest on 31 Day Notice Account	286.44
HSBC	Interest on Money Maker Account	366.50
HSBC	Interest on 7 Day Deposit	17.65
HSBC	Interest on 7 Day Deposit	17.65
Rhyl BID	Christmas Windows Comp – frames & chocolates	36.00
HSBC	Interest on 7 Day Deposit	17.65
HSBC	Interest on 7 Day Deposit	17.65
Denbighshire CC	Precept 2023/24 – tranche 3 of 3	185,318.00
	Total income	£186,077.54

113. AUTHORISATION OF PAYMENTS/ADDITIONS TO APPROVED SUPPLIERS LIST (SCHEDULE B)

Further to min.no.143 of the meeting of Council held on 15th March 2017 and in accordance with the council's adopted financial regulations, the Chair referred to the Town Clerk's submitted schedule B (a list of non-regular payments to be released over the coming month) (circulated with agenda).

Voucher Number	Supplier	Details of Supply	Amount £
1759	B&M	Frames & chocolates for Christmas Windows comp & refreshments for meetings	49.58
1760	Morrisons	Refreshments for December Council	29.29
1761	Lawnsience	Autumn treatment at Remembrance Gardens (invoice received late)	42.00
1762	Sandra Williams	Translation services	287.68
1763	JDH Business Services Ltd	Interim Internal Audit & Report for 2023/24	450.00
1764	NMWATC	Lunches for delegates x2 at meeting on 19 th Jan 2024	44.00
1765	Denbighshire CC	Wellington Road Community Centre – Civic Offices Service Charges April to Dec 2023	11,469.00
1766	Denbigh Town Council	Tickets x2 to Charity Concert on 20 th January 2024	20.00
	Total Schedule B		£12,391.55

RESOLVED that the schedule was approved for payment and signed by two councillors.

114. FIVE-YEAR FINANCIAL PLAN

Further to the meeting of Council held on 20th December 2023, the Town Clerk referred to his and the Finance Officer's joint report (circulated with agenda) for members' approval.

RESOLVED that the Plan was adopted.

115. CONSULTATION: COMMUTED SUMS – DIOCESE OF ST. ASAPH – ST. THOMAS’S CHURCHYARD PROJECT

The Town Clerk made reference to an application the Diocese of St. Asaph has submitted for Commuted Sum funding to be provided for the development of St. Thomas’s Churchyard (application circulated with agenda), and seeking the Town Council’s support.

After some debate it was ***RESOLVED*** that members were in support of the application to enhance the churchyard area.

[Councillors Mrs E. M. Chard and Mrs J. Chamberlain-Jones declared a prejudicial interest in the above item, due to having made their own application for Commuted Sums for a project within their ward, and vacated the meeting taking no further part in discussions or voting thereon]

116. CONSULTATION: WELSH GOVERNMENT PROPOSED CHANGES TO COUNCIL TAX SYSTEM

The Town Clerk referred to the above correspondence (circulated with agenda) from Denbighshire County Council, for the Town Council’s consideration of Welsh Government’s view that the current Band structure is unfair, as those on lower tax bands pay a higher percentage of Council Tax than those on higher tax bands.

Three options had been proposed as follows:

Option 1

To retain the current 9 Council Tax bands but revalue properties to reflect market value, which would result in around 8 out of 10 households seeing their Council Tax reduce. Welsh Government feels that this would be an improvement, but would not fully address the issue of fairness.

Option 2

As above, but to also change the rates charged for each band so that households in the lower bands would see their Council Tax bills reduce and households in the higher bands would see their bills increase. Around 7 out of 10 households would see their bills reduce or would change minimally.

Option 3

To increase the number of bands from 9 to 12 (one at the bottom and two at the top), making each band broadly consistent across the whole structure and change the rates charged for each band, resulting in a lot less paid by those in the lowest bands and more paid by those in the highest. Welsh Government feels that this option would significantly reform the whole system and make it fairer throughout, with bigger reductions for households in the lowest bands and bigger increases for those in the highest. About 7 out of 10 households would see bills reduce or would change minimally.

The Town Clerk advised that Denbighshire County Council's preferred option was Option 3, which would be presented to their meeting of Cabinet next week, and asked members what theirs would be?

The Town Clerk added that the options put forward were a starting point and that he expected there to be a number of further consultations on this matter, with much finer details provided.

RESOLVED that members agreed that the current system was outdated and unfair and therefore in need of a review and that of the three options initially proposed, their preferred was Option 3.

[Councillor Mrs W. M. Mullen-James declared a prejudicial interest in the above item due to her position as a member of Denbighshire County Council's Cabinet, and vacated the meeting, taking no further part in discussions or voting thereon]

117. PROPOSED SUB-COMMITTEE: DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL BUDGETRY PRESSURES

Further to the meeting held on 20th December 2023, the Town Clerk referred to his report (circulated with agenda) asking members if they felt a small committee to consider all future financial requests, including any from Denbighshire County Council, and make recommendations to Council.

With regard to any requests received from Denbighshire County Council, the Town Clerk recommended that the committee to only consider them at a time when the full scope of cuts are known, making it best placed to consider them in the round.

RESOLVED that members agreed that a small committee of Town Councillors only, would be useful and that membership would be Councillors S. Feeney, K. R. Jones, A. J. Rutherford, D. Simmons and A. Walker.

118. CLOSURE OF MEETING

There being no further items of business the Mayor declared the meeting closed.

Mayor:

Date: