

At the hybrid **MEETING of COUNCIL** held on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2024, commencing at 6.00pm.

**PRESENT**

Councillor Miss C. L. Williams (Mayor)

Councillors M. Blackwell, Mrs M. A. Blakeley-Walker, Mrs E. M. Chard, Mrs J. M. Evans, A. R. James, K. R. Jones (until 7.00pm during item no.39), Mrs D. L. King (until 6.50pm during item no.38), Ms J. L. McAlpine, B. Mellor (from 6.25pm until 6.30pm during item no.37), Ms R. Roberts, Miss S. L. Roberts, Ms V. Roberts, A. J. Rutherford, D. Simmons and A. Walker.

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

**35. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were submitted by Councillors Mrs J. Butterfield JP MBE, Mrs J. Chamberlain-Jones, S. Feeney and Miss S. Fleming.

**36. DECLARATION OF VACANCY IN THE OFFICE OF COMMUNITY COUNCILLOR FOR THE RHYL TRELLEWELYN WARD**

The Town Clerk formally declared a vacancy in the office of Community Councillor for the Trellewelyn Ward, which he would pass to Denbighshire County Council's Elections department for them to deal with in the usual way.

**37. PRESENTATION: LONG-TERM PLAN FOR TOWNS & RHYL TOWN BOARD**

The Mayor welcomed Ms Liz Greave, Head of Corporate Support Service Performance, Digital & Assets, Denbighshire County Council and Mr Adam Roche, Chair of the Rhyl Town Board to the meeting and invited them to address members.

Ms Greave advised that:

- The Long-Term Plan for Towns initiative was launched by the UK Government in September 2023, as part of its Levelling Up programme, to identify and address long-term regeneration issues.
- £20 million to be spent on Rhyl over the next 10 years. More capital than revenue.
- In March 2024, as part of the Budget, Rhyl was announced as one of the second tranche of towns to be included.
- Denbighshire County Council was given immediate responsibilities, including:
  - to establish a Board, support the Board to produce a 10 year vision and strategy and manage the funding.

- to submit the Chair Biography, Board Structure, Terms of Reference, Conflict of Interest Policy and Town Boundaries form by 1<sup>st</sup> June 2024.
- Although the governance of the initiative would be the job of the County Council, it is very clear that the vision should be very much community led and the Board should therefore be made up of a broad representation of the community, and that the Chair could not be a politician.
- The Board has been established and consists of 17 members.
- The Vision and Strategy has to be focused on three themes, which are Safety & Security, High Street, Regeneration & Heritage and Transport & Connectivity.
- The first Board meeting will be on 29<sup>th</sup> July with various actions needed by 1<sup>st</sup> November 2024, like to agree governance, develop the 10 year Vision and the delivery plan for the first three-year period.
- All the documentation and information required was submitted at the beginning of June, as requested, but since then and as a consequence of the General Election, we are now dealing with a different UK Government, with a new Minister, with a new Title. The submission has not been signed off, and so we have not yet received the second amount of funding to enable the next work to be done by the Board.
- Best case will be that the new Minister signs the submission off and we receive the funds and proceed.
- Worse case will be that the new UK Government decides it does not want to continue with the initiative.

Mr Roche introduced himself to members as being born and bred in Rhyl and having always lived here. He had worked for the Co-Op for 35 years and more importantly in large scale transformational change for the last 15 years.

Currently he is Head of the Co-Op's Change Portfolio covering 160 projects with a budget of over £100 million.

He has also been the volunteer Managing Director at Rhyl Football Club for the last four year. A role that he loves. The Club now has over 200 players with 60% of those being female, which is something he's really proud of.

He is married to Hayley and has two grown-up children, and he's really proud of all three.

He hopes to provide clear introductions and understanding of what the Board has been set up to deliver very quickly, moving on to determine the strengths and opportunities of the Board and identify what are the upskills the Board will need to deliver the work.

Community engagement is key and he felt that this was part of his role as Chair to make sure that that was at the heart of the project.

Mr Roche added that he also wanted to get some quick wins off the bat from the outset, once the data had been analysed, which would help to get people onboard, which was crucial. He wanted to take local people along with them.

Finally, he said that he was super excited about the role and at the prospect of being part of a positive initiative.

In response to questions put to them by members, Ms Greave and Mr Roche said:

- That the Board was entirely independent and was the decision making body, not Denbighshire County Council.
- As Chair of the Board, Mr Roche was clear that he had not signed up to the role to be an employee of Denbighshire County Council or to simply nod to whatever Denbighshire County Council's opinions or wishes were. If that was to become the case, then he would vacate the position.
- That they could see nothing wrong with the Town Council's Town Plan document being brought to the attention of the Board.
- That the expectation was that the UK Government will be quite flexible about the carrying over of funding from tranche to tranche.
- That funding amounts allocated to projects could be used to draw down other funding amounts from elsewhere to enhance or continue them. This was something that UK Government was very keen to encourage.

The Mayor thanked Ms Greave and Mr Roche for their attendance before they left the meeting.

### **38. PRESENTATION: RHYL POCKET PARK**

The Mayor welcomed Mr James Evans, Economic and Business Development Manager, Denbighshire County Council to the meeting and invited him to address members.

Mr Evans explained that after numerous attempts to work with the owners of the eye-sore buildings at 123-125 High Street, unfortunately none of the post demolition proposals were viable for the owners, so Denbighshire County Council used Welsh Government funding to purchase both buildings for their demolition.

The proposal for the space was to introduce a gateway 'Pocket Park'.

The proposal has gained the approval of all of the necessary County Council groups and committees, and the County Ward Members were also happy with the project.

After feasibility work, the project was successful in securing £950,000 from the UK Government's Levelling Up scheme, which they were hoping would be honoured by the new UK Government, to enable it to proceed.

The concept design had to:

- use the agreed materials as specified within the Design Guide for Rhyd document.
- consider that the space was within a Conservation Area.
- be high quality and low maintenance.
- include tree coverage and wildflowers.
- mirror the aesthetics of the 1930s Art Deco Bingo Hall across the road from the space, by introducing curves into its design.
- showcase the original gable end with the old advertising lettering.

Mr Evans showed the initial concept design images of the proposed park, featuring greening, seating and lighting which would be submitted for more detailed design.

The proposal would go before the Capital Scrutiny Group at the end of July 2024, for its approval. Then it would be signed-off (hopefully) by the new UK Government, before the more detailed design work could begin.

The public would then be engaged with and informed and all of the statutory consents would be gained before the second building could be demolished. Demolition would take place outside of the tourist season.

The previous UK Government wanted to see the project completed by March 2026.

In response to questions and comments raised, Mr Evans said that:

- the design crime officer is quite happy with the design and can't see anything of concern.
- The space is covered by the town centres Public Space Protection Order, so any antisocial behaviour will be acted upon by the Police.
- The gable end will be preserved and protected now that it's open to the elements, which he suspected would be a requirement of CADW anyway.

The Mayor thanked Mr Evans for his time before he left the meeting.

The Town Clerk asked members if they felt a living Christmas tree in the space might be worth exploring with Denbighshire County Council, in addition to one erected on the High Street each year?

**RESOLVED** *that the Town Clerk to explore the idea of a living Christmas tree in the Pocket Park.*

### 39. **MINUTES**

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

Meeting of Council - 19<sup>th</sup> June 2024 - Min. Nos. 21-34

Proposed by Councillor Miss C. L. Williams and seconded by Councillor A. Walker and **RESOLVED** as a correct record.

Planning Committee - 19<sup>th</sup> June 2024 - Min. Nos. 4-6

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

The Town Clerk referred to application no.45/2024/1019 and advised that the developer had contacted the office and had been provided with a response on behalf of the Town Council, before being directed to Denbighshire County Council.

Planning Committee - 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2024 - Min. Nos. 7-9

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

To Confirm or otherwise:

Finance & General Purposes Committee - 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2024 - Min. Nos. 16-25

Proposed by Councillor A. J. Rutherford and seconded by Councillor Ms J. L. McAlpine and **RESOLVED** as a correct record and confirmed for action.

With regard to min.no.20 (Consultation: Denbighshire County Council – Budget Consultation Meeting) Councillor A. J. Rutherford reported that he and the Town Clerk had attended the meeting remotely, and briefly reported that their financial position was reported, but no specifics as such were shared around future proposals. There was a real emphasis on resetting the relationship with City, Town and Community Councils and an acknowledgement of their value and their future roles.

### 40. **MAYOR'S REPORT**

The Mayor submitted details of events she had attended over the past month, and referred particularly to Conwy Town Council's river cruise, which she said was wonderful and thanked Councillors K. Jones, Mrs D. L. King and Ms J. L. McAlpine for attending the Rhyl Carnival and judging the Floats and Carnival Queens in her absence.

The Deputy Mayor reported that unfortunately the one event he was going to attend, Abergele Town Council's Civic Service, was cancelled.

**RESOLVED** that the report was received.

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

Further to min.no.143 of the meeting of Council held on 15<sup>th</sup> 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).

The Town Clerk made reference to an additional payment not included on the schedule circulated to members, which was a payment to Councillor Miss C. L. Williams, detailed below.

<b>Voucher Number</b>	<b>Supplier</b>	<b>Details of Supply</b>	<b>Amount £</b>
1866	Racecraft Signs	Updating of Honours Board	162.00
1870	NMWATC	Lunches for 2 delegates for meeting on 19 <sup>th</sup> July 2024	44.00
1871	Amazon UK	Stationary Order	252.98
	Cllr C. L. Williams	Deputy Mayoral expenses April/May 2024 & Mayoral expenses May-July 2024	157.00
	<b>Total Schedule B</b>		<b>£615.98</b>

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

42. **INVESTMENTS PERFORMANCE 2024/25: QUARTER 1 APRIL – JUNE 2024**

The Town Clerk referred to his and the Finance Officer's joint report (circulated with agenda) for members to note, and added that due to the Finance Officer's due diligence, they were forecasting that interest would be £5,500 more than budgeted if the current rate remained.

**RESOLVED** that the report was received.

43. **ANNUAL INVESTMENTS STRATEGY 2024/25 – REVIEW AND DEPOSITS WITH HSBC**

The Town Clerk made reference to his and the Finance Officer's joint report (circulated with agenda) seeking members' authority to revise the current strategy to allow officers to invest in the HSBC Money Market for a longer term (from seven days to one month) to receive a higher rate of interest.

In addition, to reinvest the HSBC deposit of £85,000 that matures on 8<sup>th</sup> August 2024, for a further six month term.

**RESOLVED** that the revised strategy for 2024/25 was approved.

**44. CORRESPONDENCE: RHYL CARNIVAL COMMITTEE**

The Town Clerk reported receipt of an e-mail from the above (circulated with agenda) inviting councillors to engage with and support the annual event.

Councillor Ms J. L. McAlpine advised that Councillor K. R. Jones (who unfortunately had dropped out of the meeting due to a poor connection) was keen to get involved with the Carnival in his role as the Town Council's Youth Champion.

***RESOLVED*** that Councillor K. R. Jones was appointed to attend a meeting of the organising committee, and report back to the council, subject to Councillor Jones accepting his nomination.

**45. ADDITIONAL ITEM: RHYL TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE & MUSEUM**

The Town Clerk advised that Denbighshire County Council's Mr Peter McDermot had asked to present to the town Council on the outcome of the draft feasibility study undertaken to assess the potential relocation of the Museum and the Tourist Information Centre to one site.

***RESOLVED*** that the request was approved for the September meeting of Council.

***FURTHER RESOLVED*** that the Town Clerk to ask Mr McDermot for a written report prior to the meeting, to enable members to consider the information and prepare any relevant questions or comments for the meeting.

**46. ADDITIONAL ITEM: PROSPEROUS DENBIGHSHIRE**

The Town Clerk reported receipt of an e-mail from Denbighshire County Council asking for the Town Council to appoint a representative to sit on a focus group to develop an understanding of the issues facing town centres to ultimately inform their revised Economic strategy under their Prosperous Denbighshire objective.

***RESOLVED*** that Councillor Ms J. L. McAlpine was appointed, subject to her availability once the time and date of the first meeting was established.

**47. ADDITIONAL ITEM: RHYL TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE**

The Town Clerk reported receipt of a second request from Denbighshire County Council's Mr Peter McDermott, asking the Town Council to consider providing funding to the Tourist Information Centre, to enable it to remain open from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2024 until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.

The amount requested was £16,200.

***RESOLVED*** that the request be put to the Town Council's Denbighshire County Council Budget Pressures Sub-Committee for it to consider and make recommendations to the Council.

**48. AUGUST RECESS – DELEGATION OF EXECUTIVE POWERS**

The Mayor requested members’ approval of the arrangements for the delegation of Executive Powers to the Town Clerk in consultation with the following members for the period 18<sup>th</sup> July until 4<sup>th</sup> September 2024:

- Civic Matters - Mayor and/or Deputy Mayor
- Planning Matters - Chair and/or Vice-Chair of Planning Committee
  
- SOP Committee items - Chair and/or Vice-Chair of SOP Committee
- All Other Business - Chair and/or Vice-Chair of Finance & General Purposes Committee

**RESOLVED** that the arrangements were confirmed.

**49. CLOSURE OF MEETING**

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

Mayor: .....

Date: .....