

Minutes of Meeting 7/11/2024

Present: Cllr Dilys Evans, Eifion Roberts, Eluned Jones, Eric Williams, Moira Mai, Huw Symonds, Clare Mackintosh, Sion McGuinness, Rhys Evans, Jacqueline Allen, Dilwyn Morgan (Local Member for Gwynedd Council) and Huw Antur (*Clerc*).

Apologies: Apology accepted by Cllr Fiona Hopkins.

Public: No one present.

Also present: John Caradog Williams and family for the first part of the meeting.

4 National Park staff for the follow-up discussion.

Honour: Former councillor John Caradog Williams and family were welcomed to the first part of the meeting, this to have an opportunity to honour him and to thank him for his service to the Town Council and to the residents of Bala for a period of 48 years. The thanks were paid by Cllr Eifion Roberts, who worked with John for years on the council. He said John has given a lifetime of service to the council, and his experience is still valuable to younger council members. He said the town has been fortunate to have him as a councillor, and that he has worked quietly and tirelessly over the years. John responded by thanking everyone for their co-operation over the years, and wished the council well into the future. John was presented with an ornate plate as a mark of appreciation for his work.

Snowdonia National Park: Angela Jones, David Prysor, Arwel Morris and Simon Jones were welcomed to the meeting. Angela Jones explained that they are working on the National Park Management Plan, and working with communities to bring people together. Parking problems were discussed in the area, specifically the area from Bala to Llanywer, and also the Llyn Tegid foreshore. We discussed the possibility of installing a barrier at the foreshore entrance to prevent overnight parking on site, and to direct drivers to the Plase and Grin car parks when the foreshore is full, so that town businesses benefit from the visitors. They also discussed the possibility of working together with local landowners to find a solution to the problem. We discussed the safety of Park staff in dealing with visitors, and also the possibility of increasing the parking charge by the lake. We discussed the possibility of redesigning the parking areas on the foreshore, making sure there was always access to emergency vehicles. It was agreed that changing visitor behaviour takes time, and that there is a role to educate people in doing this. They highlighted the Caru Eryri Volunteer Scheme which provides volunteering opportunities for residents of the National Park. Park staff were thanked for their time and plans for Bala.

1. **The Mayor:** All were welcomed to the meeting by the Mayor, Cllr Dilys Evans.
2. **Interest:** There was no expression of interest.
3. **Minutes:** Accuracy of meeting minutes confirmed 3/10/24.
4. **Clerk Issues / Issues arise:**
 - i. **Vacancy of Council:** One expression of interest was received for a seat on the council, and following discussion it was unanimously agreed to co-opt Ken Edwards as a member of the town council.
 - ii. **Tomen y Bala:** It was agreed to continue discussions on the proposed installation of benches on the Domen with the Rotary Club, and it was stipulated that benches of recycled black material would be suitable. They agreed to discuss placing a small plaque on the bench. It was noted that gaps had been created in the tip hedge to facilitate a view of the local scenery. They also agreed to work with National Park staff to manage rhododendron at the tip, this as part of the Nature Challenge Fund and the town council's biodiversity plan.
 - iii. **Place Creation Plan:** A report was given from a meeting on October 10th during which projects identified in the Place Creation Plan were identified as open to consideration for funding by various public funds. It was noted that Cwmni Pum Plwy Penllyn will co-ordinate the work of the local forum, and that potential projects include creating a digital brand for the town, developing the High Street, creating a Sustainable Tourism Plan and developing ideas for Neuadd Buddug.
 - iv. **Town Centre Art Scheme:** It has been noted that the work has been completed, and this has involved close collaboration between a number of bodies and individuals. It was agreed that it would be good to have a launch to work, and it was suggested to hold a launch as part of the Late Night Shopping Night on December 5th.
 - v. **High Street Matters –** It has been reported that there has been no response from NMWTRA to the request for a table of different authorities' responsibilities for different aspects of High Street management.
 - vi. **Cysgod y Coleg Play Area:** A response has been received from Adra stating that they do not have specific plans to develop the play area.
 - vii. **Bus Shelter Cleaning:** An initial valuation has been received for cleaning two additional bus shelters between Cae Croes and the Leisure Centre. Following discussion it was agreed to advertise the work, with the agreement to expire at the same time as the agreement of the remaining town bus shelters.

- viii. RFC Licence: Information has been received that Gwynedd Council is holding a hearing on this application on November 11th. It was agreed to ask Gwynedd Council to consider the Town Council's original comments on the application.
 - ix. Benches near Tom Ellis memorial: It has been reported that Gwynedd Council has offered to repair the benches. It was noted that it would be best to re-locate them in a different location once the work was completed, away from the trees on High Street.
5. **Gwynedd Council:** Cllr Dilwyn Morgan reported that the Welsh Government's Children's Minister and the Older People's Commissioner for Wales had recently visited Bala. He said Gwynedd Council's financial outlook was grim, and cuts were likely in services. He said the pavements near Ysgol Godre'r Berwyn were being redone, and he also said the Mayor was invited to take part in a podcast by Rheilffordd Llyn Tegid.
6. **Bala – Yma o Hyd:** There was an update of the celebrations, and it was noted that activities were drawing to a close, with only two events remaining. It has been reported that there will be a lantern parade in the town on Saturday 2 November, and that the parade goes from the Fire Station up to the Leisure Centre, accompanied by the Llangollen Silver Band. Everyone was reminded of Bala Sêr Night on November 14th, accompanied by the children of Ysgol Godre'r Berwyn, Glain Rhys and Dilwyn Morgan.

7. Subcommittees:

- Christmas Sub-Committee: It has been reported that the Christmas lights have been installed, and the lighting arrangements in place.
- Sub-Assets Committee: It has been reported that the dangerous slabs on the town pavements have been repaired.
- Friendly Town Subcommittee: Nothing to report.
- Biodiversity Sub-Committee: It has been reported that planters have recently been planted, and that more will need to be planted in 2025.
- Finance subcommittee: Arrangements were made to meet in early December, and all sub-committees were asked to lay out their financial needs to the clerk by then.
- Sustainable Tourism Subcommittee: It has been reported that the group has met, and outlined their terms of reference. They noted that they were working towards the objectives of Snowdonia National Park's Sustainable Tourism Plan and Gwynedd Council's Ardal Ni Area Plan. It was noted that one of the main aims of the group will be to create a digital brand and promotional website for the town.

Representatives on organisations:

- One Voice Cymru Meirionnydd: No report.
- Bala and Penllyn Community Association: No report.
- Cwmni Pum Plwy Penllyn: It has been reported that upgrades to Canolfan Bro Tegid are imminent, and that the organisations using the centre are aware of the work.

8. **Planning Issues:** There were no applications to consider.

9. Finance Matters:

- i. The most recent financial position was taken into account, with £16,978.98 reported in the current account, £26,691.54 in the retention account and £327.50 in the Mayor's Fund. It was noted that a balance of £2,193.46 had been earmarked towards the costs of the Bala – Yma o Hyd celebrations, and £3,000 had been earmarked for the development of the Astro Field.
- ii. Payments were approved for cleaning Bus Shelters, Clerk's salary payment, Cyfnod invoices, Capel Clay, Bala 700 invoices and flower invoices.
- iii. Applications for financial support were received from the Urdd National Eisteddfod and the Welsh Air Ambulance, and agreed to be considered in early 2025.

10. Correspondence:

- i) Triathlon: A message was received from the triathlon organisers thanking everyone's cooperation during the 2024 event, and confirming that the 2025 triathlon will be held on September 7th.
- ii) One Voice Wales – received information about the council's Sub-Committee Terms of Reference, a joint event with the SLCC and information about the Safe and Warm Hubs scheme.
- iii) Gwynedd Council – information has been received about the work of the Ardal Ni team, a request for information on vacant properties on High Street, a temporary Arenig Road closure notice for essential works and information about the council's Nature Towns Plan.
- iv) Betsi Cadwaladr Health Board - information has been received about their soon to be held Roadshow in Pwllheli.
- v) Welsh Communities Commission – a copy of the report of the Welsh Communities Commission was received, and it was agreed to be considered at the next meeting of the Tre Council.
- vi) Plas Tan y Bwlch – A letter has been received asking for support to keep Plas Tan y Bwlch in public or community ownership. Agreed to support the application.
- vii) Derek Williams Theatre – the copy of the theatre's application for a Property Licence has been accepted. It was agreed to support the application, but it was stipulated that the application should also go before the Governors of Ysgol Godre'r Berwyn.

11. Town Councillors' local issues:

- i) A494 Safety: Comments have been received about the safety of the road into the town from the direction of Llanfor. The clerk was asked to respond to the comments. It was also noted that work was continuing on the A494 near Riverside, and that this was having an impact on the town.
- ii) Remembrance Sunday: Members were reminded of the Remembrance Sunday Service on Sunday November 10th.

The meeting closed at 9.30pm and the next meeting will be Thursday 12 December 2024.