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WHITFORD COMMUNITY COUNCIL



Local Government and Elections

(Wales) Act 2021 (Section 52)

Annual Report (Reflections)

Year ending 31st March, 2022

The Council

Community Councils were established under the Local Government Act 1972 and replaced the previous system of Parish Councils. There are over 730 Town & Community Councils in Wales, with over 8,000 Councillors.

Within the Whitford Community Council area there are five villages; Carmel, Gorsedd, Lloc, Pantasaph, and Whitford. The population of the area is 1,895 (January 2022 Register of Electors).

During the reporting year all Council meetings have been held remotely due to the pandemic. Members of the community and press were able to connect. Council meetings are held on the second Thursday of the month (no meetings held in August and December) and commence at 7.00pm. (From September, 2022 – meetings will commence in St. Paul's Church in Gorsedd). These meetings will be hybrid. Non-scheduled meetings are also held in an emergency or possibly in relation to an urgent planning application – especially during the months of December and August. These meetings will be publicly advertised.

The agenda for the meetings are advertised locally including the Council's web site a few days prior to the meeting. Residents of the community are welcome to address the Council Members for a reasonable period of time, generally at the commencement of the meeting, by providing three days notice. Should any resident wish to attend a meeting, please contact the Clerk to the Council.

Complaints

During the reporting year one complaint was made to the Wales Public Services Ombudsman against the Council. This was in relation to a street lighting concern. The complaint was dismissed by the Ombudsman. There were no complaints made against the Council to the Flintshire County Standards Committee.

Councillors

During the reporting year there were twelve members of the Whitford Community Council, with Councillor Richard Dolphin as Chair of Council and Councillor Billy Glynn as Vice Chair. During the reporting year Councillor Robert J. Hughes sadly passed away and Councillor Joseph W. Williams did not seek re-election in May 2022. Both Councillors were long serving and committed to the area they served.

Following the Town & Community Council elections in Wales held in May of this year, ten candidates completed their nomination papers. Following the display of public notices, two residents have been co-opted to the Council.

Councillor names and contact details

Councillor Tim Barks (Independent) 01352 720375	Councillor Caradoc W. Jones, 01352 712079
Councillor Chris Dolphin (Community & County) (Independent) 01352 713415	Councillor Matthew J. Marshall (Independent) 077639 75531
Councillor Richard Dolphin (Independent) 01352 710764	Councillor Gareth Sharp * 01352 715614
Councillor Matthew Foster (Independent) 07900 520790	Councillor Paul C. Urquhart 01745 563133
Councillor Billy Glynn (Independent) 01352 712418	Councillor Melanie Wallis * 01352 712369
Councillor Sharon James 01352 716822	Councillor Emma K. Warbrick 01352 712356

* denotes co-opted

Freedom of Information Act

During this reporting year two Freedom of Information requests were received. The full information requested was provided within the required timescale.

Local Committees and Outside Bodies

Following the Welsh Town & Community Councils elections in May of this year, the Council Members who serve on Local Committees and Outside Bodies during 2021 / 2022 have changed from this reporting year. The following list is current for year 2022 / 2023.

Name of Organisation	Councillor Representative
Carmel Village Hall Trustees	Councillors' Chris Dolphin / Richard Dolphin / Gareth Sharp

Flintshire County Forum	Councillors' William Glynn / Matt Foster
Flintshire District CAB	Councillor Emma Warbrick
Flintshire Forum (Sub Group)	Councillor Emma Warbrick
Halkyn Mountain Joint Consultative Board	Councillor Caradoc W. Jones
Pen y Gelli Nature Reserve Sub-Committee	Councillors' Matt Marshall / Melanie Wallis
Planning Sub-Committee	All Councillors
Street Scene / Environmental – Visual Audit	Chair / Vice Chair / Clerk
West Flintshire Town & Community Councils Working Group	Councillor Caradoc W. Jones
Whitford Association (Glebe Field)	Councillors' Caradoc Jones / Richard Dolphin

Contacting the Council

Contact details for the Clerk and Financial Officer to Whitford Community Council

R. Phillip Parry, Ty Cornel, 51, St. Michael's Drive, CAERWYS, Flintshire, CH7 5BS.	Tel: 01352 720547 E-mail: Clerk@whitford-council.wales Web site: www.whitford-council.wales
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Council's objectives (2021 / 2022)

During this reporting year the key objectives of the Council were:

- To hold a Public Consultation on Active Travel (Walking or cycling – as an alternative means to motorised transport). In particular, to seek ideas for improvement from residents of the five villages. Two events were held, a coffee morning in the Carmel Village Hall, which was well attended. Unfortunately, an evening on-line session was not so well attended. Questionnaire forms were available to complete at both at the above events and also on-line. The Council were pleased with the number of completed forms.
- Continuation of a roadside tarmac footpath further towards Gorsedd Village. Phase three was completed during this financial year at a cost of £6,824.00. The continuation of the footpath is awaiting a funding bid made by Flintshire County Council to the Welsh Government, which also includes footpaths in other areas of the Community Council.
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- Speed awareness signage in Carmel & Gorsedd. These have been installed with a five year agreement with Flintshire County Council, at a cost of £7,860.00
- Speed awareness signage in Pantasaph. These have been installed with a five year agreement with Flintshire County Council, at a cost of £11,780.00
- Carmel Play Area – new play area equipment. Completed at a cost of £10,000.00
- The re-commencement of the Children’s Summer Play Scheme. This was organised by Flintshire County Council, with the cost to the Community Council £4,763.00

Council’s objectives - 2022 / 2023

During the 2022 / 2023 financial year, the Council have agreed the following priorities:

- ❖ (Provisional) Community Asset Transfer of land - adjacent to Ysgol Bro Carmel - £10,000.00
- ❖ Environmental Budget - £5,000.00 (to include maintenance of Council’s street furniture (bench seats, notice boards and land)
- ❖ Purchase of additional bench seats - £2,500.00
- ❖ Upgrade to Whitford Play area - £10,000.00 (Match funding with Flintshire County Council)
- ❖ New Village name signs (cost unknown – subject to inspection report)
- ❖ Completion of the Red K6 Phone Box project in Pantasaph to house a defibrillator - £3,000.00. The Council have adopted the phone box from BT Payphones for a nominal £1.00. A defibrillator has been received from NHS Wales. The phone box has been painted and the surrounding area cleared of overgrowth. A planning application for change of use from a payphone in a conservation area, to house a defibrillator is awaiting a planning decision.
- ❖ Continuation of Footpath in Gorsedd (Cost unknown to date – but subject to a Welsh Government grant application made by Flintshire County Council)

(Funding for the above projects will be utilised from the annual precept and reserves)

Financial

Asset Register

The value of the Community Council’s asset register totals £38,196.00. A copy of the register can be obtained from the Clerk to the Council.

Council budget

The Whitford Community Council precept for the financial year 2021 / 2022 was £52,500.00. This amount is precept on residential properties within the community, and equates to a figure of £44.94, per household on a Band D property. There are 34 Town

and Community Councils in the County of Flintshire, the average Band D precept for the County is £47.83 with the highest being £75.40. There were 1,168 Band D household properties within the Whitford Community area – as at January 2021.

The Band D household precept for the Whitford Community Council area, is made up as follows:

- Flintshire County Council – £1,394.50
- Police & Crime Commissioner – £305.55
- Whitford Community Council – £44.94

Total £1,744.99

The Community Council's precept for 2022 / 2023 was set at £55,000.00 – an increase of £2,500.00. The Band D property charge will increase by £2.91p a year (6.48% = 24/25p a month) to a yearly charge of £47.85).

Financial Assistance

Each year, Whitford Community Council considers requests for financial assistance to support the work of its local groups, organisations and charities. Grants are specifically made by the Council in the interest of its local area and its residents. The Council allocates grants for financial assistance from the annual precept, in accordance with Section 137 (Local Government Act 1972) and other National and Wales Government Acts.

During the reporting year the Community Council granted a number of applications for financial assistance, which totalled: £1,500.00 under Section 137 and £1,800.00 under various Local Government Acts.

Note: From 1st April, 2022, applicants for financial assistance are required to complete an application form. The form, together with a policy document can be perused and downloaded from the Council web site, at: <http://www.whitford-council.wales> (public notices & financial)

Members Allowance

Payments (Allowances) to Members of Whitford Community Council - 2021 / 2022

In accordance with Section 151 of the Local Government Measure 2011, Community and Town Councils must publish within their authority area the remuneration received by their Members by 30th September following the end of the year to which the payment relates. The information must also be sent to the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPFW) by the same date.

Whitford Community Council provided this information to the (IRPFW) on 29th June, 2022, and was uploaded to the Council's web site at: www.whitford-council.wales (public notices and financial).

Publication of audited accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022

Regulation 15(5) of the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 (as amended) requires that by 30 September 2022, Whitford Community Council publish its accounting statements for the year ended 31 March 2022 together with any certificate, opinion, or report issued, given or made by the Auditor General.

The Community & Town Councils in Wales – Annual Return for the Year Ended 31 March 2022, has been submitted to Wales Audit on the 9th June, 2022. A copy of the Annual Return was subsequently published on the Council's notice boards and web site at: www.whitford-council.wales (public notices and financial). Following audit, the certificate and other documents will be uploaded to the web page.

Environmental (Wales Act) 2016 (S6)

Under the above Act a Public Authority in Wales must prepare and publish a biodiversity plan. Whilst the Community Council adopted a draft plan, the Council are working with Flintshire County Council, who are delivering a number of biodiversity projects across the County. This Council's biodiversity plan will be updated later this year and thereafter published.

Flintshire County Council

In 2014 the Community Council agreed to adopt the following: A Shared Community – Charter between Flintshire County Council and Town & Community Councils in the County. Two Councillors and the Clerk to the Council attend County Forum meetings, which are generally held twice a year, together with representatives from all 34 Town & Community Councils in Flintshire. During the pandemic these meetings have been suspended. It is hoped that the County will arrange a meeting before the end of 2022.

Planning Applications

The Community Council is not a planning authority and as such does not make final decisions on planning applications; this is the responsibility of Flintshire County Council. However, the Community Council is a statutory consultee and as such receives all planning applications relating to the community. The Community Council do make their respective comments and suggestions on all planning applications, including requesting site meetings.

Details of the planning applications that this Council made comment upon, can be found in the monthly meeting minutes – on the following web site: www.whitford-council.wales (minutes of meetings).

Street Lighting

The street lighting in the Whitford Community Council area is administered jointly between the Community Council and Flintshire County Council. Whilst the majority of the street lights on the adopted housing estate roads are the responsibility of Flintshire County Council, the street lighting, generally sited on roadside wooden poles, are the responsibility of the Community Council.

To report a Community Council faulty street light, please contact the Clerk. Contact details for Flintshire County Council: 01352 701234, or e-mail the Street Scene Department on:

streetscene@flintshire.gov.uk or by completing an on-line form at:

www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Streetscene/Street-lighting.aspx

Training plans

Under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 Section 67 - all Town & Community Councils in Wales are required to produce a training plan for Councillors and Clerk, by the 5th November, 2022. This is in progress

This End of Year report was adopted by the Members of Whitford Community Council, on Thursday 8th September, 2022 - Minute number: 6(D). 163/22