

HOLYWELL TOWN COUNCIL

CYNGOR TREF TREFFYNNON

Minutes of the meeting of the **Town Centre Sub-Committee** held in the Council Chamber, Bank Place Offices, Holywell on Wednesday 6 September 2017 at 10.00am.

PRESENT: Councillor E.B. Palmer (Chairman).

Councillors: J.M. Johnson (Mayor), M. Brooke, L.A. Carter, K. Davies, P.A. Johnson (Observing), S. Johnson, P.J. McGarry, B. Scragg.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from Councillors A. Coleman, R. Dolphin, M.D. Phelan and P.A. York.

IN ATTENDANCE: J. Baker (Clerk), M.G. Fearnley (Community Engagement Officer), C.S. Lowry (Support Officer).

TC9. ADDRESS BY CHAIRMAN OF TOWN CENTRE BUSINESS SUB-GROUP

The Chairman of the Town Centre Business Sub-Group Russ Warburton was invited to address the council on behalf of town centre businesses, to speak on matters of concern in relation to the pedestrianisation order on Holywell High Street.

The primary aim of the presentation was to convey the arguments for de-pedestrianisation of the High Street to members of the sub-committee, which would allow the street to be opened up to traffic and for free parking. A summary of the main points raised are as follows:

- To request a one way system with free limited parking bay provision, allowing direct vehicular access onto the High Street.
- To express concern about reduced footfall and loss of trade affecting businesses.
- To seek clarification on the reasons for the argument against opening the High Street.
- To express the view that de-pedestrianisation would regenerate the High Street and attract new businesses.
- To inform Members of the feedback obtained from other towns following re-opening of their high streets to traffic.
- To express concern about the current arrangements from a health and safety perspective.

- To inform Members of the support the Group has received through their own informal consultation.
- To express a view on the potential holding of a referendum.

RESOLVED:

That Russ Warburton be thanked for attending and presenting his report to Members on this important matter.

TC10. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – MEMBERS’ CODE OF CONDUCT

None.

TC11. PEDESTRIANISATION ORDER – HOLYWELL HIGH STREET

Members discussed and considered the letter received from Derrick Charlton, Operational Manager Streetscene, Flintshire County Council. The County Council were seeking the position of the Town Council in relation to Holywell High Street, with regards to their proposal to review the pedestrian zones and explore the possibility of placing free limited waiting parking places on the High Street. The County Council are requesting the Town Council informally consult with local businesses and residents on this matter, which would allow the County Council to coordinate the next steps.

Members expressed concern at being asked to take a view on this when it is not a Town Council decision. It was noted that the former Delyn Borough Council, in conjunction with the Welsh Office, had taken the original decision to introduce Holywell High Street pedestrianisation. Members requested formal consultation with the people they represent to better understand the public view on this sensitive matter. A view was taken on the scope of any formal consultation which could involve neighbouring communities if the County Council feels this is appropriate, but as a minimum it was suggested the four wards of the Holywell Community be consulted on any proposals.

Members discussed consultation arrangements and felt it should include full details on any scheme put forward so that local residents are adequately informed before expressing a view on the proposals.

Members concluded this is a very sensitive and divisive matter likely to polarise opinions across the community, and were mindful of public views both for and against which have been expressed through written correspondence and on social media channels. Members felt it a challenging task to hold any worthwhile informal consultation with local residents on this matter, which could then be held as representative of the wider community.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk writes back to Flintshire County Council, requesting that they, as the principal and highway authority who will have the final decision on this important matter, undertake formal consultation with all four electoral wards within the Holywell Community. Once this is completed the County and Town Councils will both have a clear mandate and determination from the public to support the decision making process.

TC12. CLOSE OF MEETING

The Chairman closed the meeting at 10.30am.

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Chairman