

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 Monday, 10 April 2017 at 5.30pm.

PRESENT: Councillor E.B. Palmer (Chairman).
Councillors: J.M. Johnson, (Mayor), Mrs. M.D. Phelan, B. Scragg and P.A. York.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from Councillors Mrs. M. Auty, Mrs. K. Davies, Mrs. R. Dolphin and E. Watkinson.

IN ATTENDANCE: D.C. Pierce (Clerk) and M.G. Fearnley (Community Engagement Officer).

TC15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – MEMBERS’ CODE OF CONDUCT

None.

TC16. HOLYWEL TOWN CENTRE

In attendance for this item were the Rt. Hon. David Hanson MP and Hannah Blythyn AM together with Rachael Byrne, Business Development Manager – Flintshire County Council.

As requested by the Council, consideration was given to the future of the high street and the town arising from the impact of the bank closures and changing trends affecting town centres generally. For this item, Members had before them a copy of the Council’s tourism related priorities. The Clerk and the Community Engagement Officer summarised the background to the item as well as the local concerns that had brought the matter for the attention of Members.

The MP and AM both felt there was still scope to bring pressure on the bank(s) to change the proposed weekly mobile banking service to attend on a day other than a Wednesday on Holywell high street rather than at Tesco car park. The situation with the Post Office was still uncertain as it continued to look for a partner to franchise its services to operate as an add-on in other business premises elsewhere in the town. It was felt that a local campaign could be started to draw attention to the importance of retaining the existing building and its staff to continue to provide its wide ranging and increasingly important services for the public, centrally as at present. Another possible option, although believed to have been actioned already, to help build confidence in the town once more, was to have a Council co-ordinated loyalty card or similar initiative for residents that could be used in local shops supported by a prize draw at regular intervals.

The following main suggestions were among those made during the positive general discussion that took place at the meeting which it was felt could be pursued to help bring about some meaningful changes:

- ensuring a commitment from Welsh Government to support and provide resources to assist Post Offices to continue to operate in purpose-built buildings on the high street where this is considered to be in the best interests of the community and local economy, especially when there have been bank closures;
- supporting local campaigns to preserve a dedicated Post Office and staff to maintain customer service standards and best practice;
- seeking to bring about changes to the proposed location and attending day of the mobile banking service in Holywell in order to maintain a banking presence and footfall on the high street;
- enquiring about the availability of funding from the banks to finance local regeneration projects to help mitigate the effects of branch closures;
- considering community use of former bank premises or other available and suitable premises e.g. as a museum;
- seeking an assurance from Santander plc on the continued operation of its branch on the high street;
- pressing, as a matter of urgency, for the overdue replacement of the 'brown' tourism signage at the Holywell entrances from the A55 and for additions to the black/white County-wide (and beyond) directional road signs where there is currently no reference to Holywell as a destination until the traveller/visitor is close to the community boundary;
- engaging in discussion with Network Rail about the prospect of a rail halt in Greenfield that could also form part of the County Council's Local Development Plan considerations;
- contacting local transport operators and the relevant organisations, to consider arranging shuttle services between the Greenfield Valley, St. Winefride's Well and the town centre, and from further afield such as for example the Presthaven Holiday Park, Gronant;
- considering the possibility of arranging a 'conference' or similar event to bring people together to encourage local involvement and ownership of ideas to regenerate the town and community.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Council records its thanks to David Hanson, Hannah Blythyn and Rachael Byrne for attending the meeting and for their helpful contributions.

- (2) That the Council be recommended to support the above suggestions for action to be co-ordinated by the Clerk and the Community Engagement Officer jointly, in consultation with the Chairman of the Town Centre Sub-Committee, and involving the MP, AM, County Council and Holywell Town Partnership as appropriate, and with periodic reports back to the Council.

TC17. CADWYN CLWYD (RURAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY): GRANTS PANEL – LOCAL ACTION GROUP

Consideration was given to the Community Engagement Officer's report on this item following its referral by the Council to the Sub-Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the Council be recommended to support the nomination of the Community Engagement Officer as a member of the Local Action Group for North East Wales (Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham) in accordance with the arrangements referred to in his report.

TC18. COMMUNITY EVENTS/ACTIVITIES PROGRAMME 2017

Members had before them a copy of this year's programme for Holywell and Greenfield in respect of the following:

- Holywell Town Centre
- Thomas Pennant Society
- The Holywell & District Society
- St. Peter's & Holy Trinity Churches
- St. Winefride's Well
- Greenfield Valley
- Holywell Football Club

Members commended the new approach to widen the scope of the programme.

RESOLVED:

That the information and new initiative be noted and welcomed.

TC19. CLOSE OF MEETING

The Chairman closed the meeting at 6.45pm.

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Chairman