

10 April 2024

Dear Councillor

You are summoned to attend a **HYBRID** meeting of **ACTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL** to be held in accordance with Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 on **TUESDAY 17 APRIL 2024** at **6.30pm**. The Meeting will be held in the **TRAINING ROOM** at **ACTON COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTRE**, Overton Way, Acton, Wrexham, LL12 7LB.

For anyone unable to attend the meeting in person, you can join the Zoom Meeting online by using this [hyperlink to join the Hybrid Council meeting on 17 April 2024](#) or use the Meeting ID: 845 8985 8000 and Passcode: 038192. Please note that the Meeting and those participating in person and online will be recorded. The business to be transacted is as set out in the agenda below.

Yours faithfully

Carole Roberts

Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer to the Council

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: At this stage of the proceedings the Chair will give any Members of the Public in attendance a reasonable opportunity to make representations about any business to be discussed at the meeting, unless doing so is likely to prejudice the effective conduct of the meeting. This does not mean that Members of the Public can take part in debate, but they must be given a reasonable opportunity to make representations about business to be discussed. The period of time designated for Public Participation at a meeting in accordance with Standing Order 3(d) shall not exceed **15** minutes unless directed otherwise by the Chair of the meeting.

3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS: To receive disclosures of personal and prejudicial interests from Councillors on matters to be considered at the meeting. The disclosure must include the nature of the interest. If you become aware, during the course of a meeting, of an interest that has not been disclosed under this item you must immediately disclose it. You may remain in the meeting and take part fully in discussion and voting unless the interest is prejudicial. A personal interest is prejudicial if a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard it as so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgment of the public interest and it relates to a financial or regulatory matter.

4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES: To confirm the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 20 March 2024 (Copy attached)

5. INFORMATION FROM 20 MARCH 2024 MINUTES:

- 1. Minute 140.2 -S116 LOCAL GOVERNMENT (WALES) MEASURE 2011 - CASUAL VACANCY – ACTON CENTRAL WARD:** Clerk to give an update

Please contact Carole Roberts, Clerk to the Council on: 07913 071470 or
E-Mail: clerk@actoncommunitycouncil.gov.uk with any apologies or requests for further information.
You can also write to the Clerk at Acton Community Resource Centre, Overton Way, Wrexham LL12 7LB

6. **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC:** It is recommended that the press and public be excluded from the Meeting during consideration of the next item of business as it is likely that, if they were present, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in the Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960.
7. **ACTON PLAY AREAS – ANNUAL PLAN PRIORITY:** Further to Minute 128.3.ii) February 2024, to consider the response from Kerry Williams, Head of Service(Operations) Environment and Technical Department, Wrexham County Borough Council (circulated separately)
8. **PROCEDURAL MATTERS:** Clerk to report on the following procedural matters:
 1. **ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2023/24:** To consider and approve the Year End Bank Reconciliation and spending progress against the 2023/24 Budget. (Copy to be circulated separately)
 2. **ANNUAL RISK ASSESSMENT REPORT** (Copy now attached)
 3. **COMMUNITY AGENT:** Mandy Woodfine-Jones the Acton Community Agent has provided the attached report for March 2024 outcomes
 4. **INSURANCE PROVIDER AND COVER FROM 1 JUNE 2024**
9. **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:** To receive an update from the Chair
10. **KEY ACTON ISSUES:** WCBC Members to report verbally on any new or Key Issues being considered by the County Bough Council that may affect the whole or part of the Community of Acton. (Item placed on the agenda in accordance with the decision contained in Minute 107 January 2011)
11. **REPORT FROM CLERK:** Clerk to report on Conference attendance, correspondence, consultations and other information that has been received since the last meeting. Details attached.
12. **PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS:** To note details of any payments received and authorise any outstanding debtor or other payments and to give approval for replenishing the Council’s current account.
13. **PLANNING RELATED MATTERS AND APPLICATIONS:** To consider any comments the Council may wish to make on any applications made under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (to be determined by Wrexham County Borough Council):
 1. **ERLAS PARK – NEIGHBOURING COMMUNITY PRE- PLANNING CONSULTATION:** Harworth Estates have given notice via email on 5 April 2024 of their intention to apply for outline planning permission to Wrexham County Borough Council for the proposed phased residential development for the construction of up to 900 residential dwellings with associated infrastructure. The notice provides a link to the consultation website where a full suite of documents and plans associated with this proposal can be found; the hyperlink is: www.erlasparkconsultation.co.uk. Members should note the closing date for all responses to this formal pre-application consultation is Tuesday 7 May 2024. The Council’s INSTRUCTIONS are requested

2. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

| Case Number/ Address / Proposed Development | Decision |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| 1. Planning Application P/2024/0166 - Valid From 05/03/2024 :Gate Hangs High, Rhosnesni Lane, Wrexham, LL13 9ES - erection of water filling station | |
| 2. Planning Application P/2024/0207 - Valid From 28/03/2024: 9 Ffordd Aled, Wrexham, LL12 7PP - erection of fencing (in retrospect) | |
| 3. Planning Application P/2024/0208 - Valid From 28/03/2024 24 Smithy Lane, Wrexham, LL12 8AR erection of annexe accommodation (in retrospect) | |

**the plans and documents for these applications can be viewed online [by clicking here](#) and selecting the Community of Gwauntyerfyn/Acton for the search. The Clerk requests an extension of the 21 day consultation period where appropriate*

Minutes of the Remote Meeting of Acton Community Council held Wednesday 20 March 2024 held remotely via Zoom.

Present:

| | | | |
|------------|-----------------------|------------|----------------------|
| Councillor | Kevin Roberts (Chair) | Councillor | R Hardy (Vice Chair) |
| " | W Baldwin | " | Ms C Jarvis |
| " | Mrs C Bettley | " | P Lloyd |
| " | M Davies | " | Ms B Martin |
| " | Ms S Edwards * | " | Ms K Speirs * |
| " | Mrs A Evans | " | Ms D Wallice * |
| " | A Gallanders | " | 2 Vacancies |
| " | Ms H Hewitt | | |

* Absent

Also Present:

Mrs Carole Roberts & Mrs Michelle Williams Clerk & Administrative Assistant to the Council
Mrs Liz Painter

134. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ms D Wallice, Ms S Edwards and Ms K Spiers.

RESOLVED – that the apologies and reasons for absence be received and accepted.

135. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no members of the public present at the meeting to make any representations as set out in Standing Order No. 3d.

136. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at this stage of the proceedings

137. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

1. The Minutes of the hybrid Council meeting held on the 21 February 2024 were received.

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the hybrid Council Meeting held on 21 February 2024 be received and confirmed as a correct record.

2. The Minutes of the hybrid Youth Committee meeting held on 28 February 2024 were received.

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Youth Committee Meeting held on 28 February 2024 be received and noted.

138. INFORMATION FROM 21 FEBRUARY 2024 MINUTES

1) **MINUTE 126- COMMUNITY AGENT:** The Chair provided an update to Members following his attendance at the poorly attended Rainbow Foundation Stakeholder Meeting. There was no provision in the Wrexham CBC contract with the Rainbow Foundation for Agents to transport Clients to events; however the Rainbow minibuses are available for use subject to reimbursement

of fuel costs from the users. There is no financial provision for events, apart from some seed money to get events up and running. Ian Pope had explained the Rainbow Foundation do have a staff policy for claiming expenses, such as mileage and that he would ensure that all staff were aware of, and, understood the policy. The Chair and Councillor Baldwin had met with the Wrexham CBC Officer who managed the contract and this would be an ongoing process.

RESOLVED – that the Chair, Vice Chair and the Clerk have a further meeting with Ian Pope and to discuss concerns about the service and a wish to have more input on the Community Agent agenda and report back to Members in due course.

2) MINUTE 127 -AVOW WELLBEING HUB: The Clerk informed Members about an AVOW suggestion received following last month's presentation, for a coffee morning be held on Wednesday 8 May 2024 in Acton Community Resource Centre to coincide with when the CAB Outreach service holds its sessions, and that an invitation be extended to the Community Agent, Mandy Woodfine-Jones to attend. Members discussed the possibility of booking a room or the cafe area. The Clerk advised caution from a budget perspective as no provision had been made for a Hub Initiative. As a way forward it was suggested that AVOW be signposted to staff at Acton Community Resource Centre to try to arrange a booking. The Chair indicated that he would consider funding the initial Acton Hub meeting from his Charity Account.

RESOLVED – that the Clerk respond to the request indicating the Community Council's support for AVOW and advising they should seek to book a room via Wrexham CBC free of charge.

3) MINUTE 128.1 - INTERNAL AUDIT: The Clerk informed Members that the Internal Auditors had been in contact with her, and she was seeking to arrange a date for the Internal Audit.

139. COMMUNITY POLICING MATTERS

As per the North Wales Police policy on Zoom meetings there were no Police Officers present at the meeting. No information had been received on the effectiveness of the 20mph speed limit, however it was noted that enforcement had only recently started. The Chair confirmed that he had received the latest Crime statistics for the Acton ward.

RESOLVED – that the present position be noted and the Chair arrange for the crime statistics he had received to be circulated to Members after the meeting.

140. PROCEDURAL MATTERS

Members considered a report from the Clerk on the following matters:

1. S116 LOCAL GOVERNMENT (WALES) MEASURE 2011: CO-OPTION OF MEMBERS TO FILL THE CASUAL COUNCILLOR VACANCY IN THE RHOSNESNI WARD: Members noted that in only one suitably qualified person had expressed an interest in putting their name forward for co-option to fill the vacancy. A copy of the application had been circulated prior to the meeting. Members proceeded to consider the application and invited the applicant to give a short address to the meeting in support of her application. Members then proceeded to consider the filling of this vacancy by a show of hands.

RESOLVED – that unanimously, Liz Painter, of 31 Camberley Drive, Wrexham be co-opted as a Member of the Community Council to fill the casual vacancy for the Rhosnesni Ward on the Council and the Clerk arrange to witness her acceptance of Office and for her to receive and Induction.

2. SECTION 116 LOCAL GOVERNMENT (WALES) MEASURE 2011: CO-OPTION OF MEMBERS TO FILL THE CASUAL COUNCILLOR VACANCY IN ACTON CENTRAL WARD: It was noted the Returning Officer had confirmed to the Clerk that there had been no response to the Notice inviting electors to call an election to fill the Casual Councillor Vacancy in the Acton Central Ward. The Community

Council must now arrange to fill the vacancy by co-option. It is a legal requirement to advertise the vacancy.

RESOLVED – that

- i) the Clerk proceed to advertise by Public Notice, the Council’s intention to fill this Casual vacancy in the Acton Central Ward by co-option and any nominations received from eligible persons to be considered at the Annual Community Council meeting to be held on 15 May 2024.**
 - ii) Members of the Community Council circulate and promote links to the Notice of Co-Option via their Social Media channels.**
- 3. ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY GOVERNOR – ALEXANDRA CP SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY:** Following the resignation of Councillor Phillip Lloyd, the Clerk to the Governing Body of Alexandra CP School, has requested that the Community Council appoint someone else to replace him. Members discussed the vacancy and Councillor Holly Hewitt volunteered to take over from Councillor Phillip Lloyd.

RESOLVED – that

- i) Councillor Holly Hewitt be appointed to the role of additional Community Governor to Alexandra CP School Governing Body.**
 - ii) The Clerk provides Councillor Hewitt’s contact details to the Clerk to the Governing Body of Alexandra CP School.**
- 4. COMMUNITY AGENT:** The Community Agent’s report highlighting February outcomes was received and noted.
- 5. INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES (IRPW) ANNUAL REPORT – FEBRUARY 2024:** In accordance with the requirements of Section 147 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 the Panel have issued its Annual report. Members considered the detail of this Report and the required determinations in response. The report was available online by following this hyperlink: [Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales’s Annual Report, February 2024](#). It was noted that [all other Determinations set out in 2022 to 2023 and 2023 to 2024 remain valid and should be applied](#).

RESOLVED – to receive and accept the Annual Report – February 2024 of the Independent Remuneration Panel and to note the range and maximum Allowances payable for Community and Town Councils in Group 2 as apply to Acton Community Council for the Financial Year 2023/24 and to confirm the Council has considered and applied the Remuneration Framework by its relevant Group as set out below.

| Group 2 | (Electorate 10,000 to 13,999) |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Extra Costs Payment | Mandatory for all members |
| Senior Role Payment | Mandatory for 1 member; optional up to 5 |
| Mayor or Chair | Optional |
| Deputy Mayor or Vice Chair | Optional |
| Attendance Allowance | Optional |
| Financial Loss | Optional |
| Travel and Subsistence | Optional |
| Cost of Care or Personal assistance | Mandatory |

1. EXTRA COSTS PAYMENT: To note this mandatory requirement and to make available a Basic payment to each member of £156 pa as a contribution to costs and expenses and to confirm that a sum of £52 per year to cover the cost of office consumables when carrying out their role shall be paid to each member of the Council unless they advise the appropriate Officer in writing that they do not want to take these mandatory payments.

2. SENIOR ROLE PAYMENT(S): To make this Mandatory requirement available to the Chair (1 member only) at an amount of £500; unless the Chair advises the appropriate Officer that they do not want to take it in writing;

3. CIVIC PAYMENT OF UP TO £1,500 TO THE MAYOR/CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL to undertake the functions of that office – Not to adopt this provision

4. CIVIC PAYMENT OF UP TO £500 TO THE DEPUTY MAYOR/ DEPUTY CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL to undertake the functions of that office – Not to adopt this provision

5. ATTENDANCE ALLOWANCE Each council can decide to introduce an attendance allowance for members. The amount of each payment must not exceed £30. A member in receipt of financial loss compensation will not be entitled to claim attendance allowance for the same event. Councils that intend to introduce an attendance allowance must set out the details of the scheme and publish them on their website - Not to adopt this provision;

6. AUTHORISATION TO PAY FINANCIAL LOSS COMPENSATION to each of the Council's members where it can be demonstrated such loss has actually occurred for attending approved duties as follows:

- Up to £55.50 for each period not exceeding 4 hours
- Up to £110.00 for each period exceeding 4 hours but not exceeding 24 hours

7. REIMBURSEMENT OF TRAVEL COSTS when undertaking approved duties: To adopt this provision subject to payments being the actual costs of travel by public transport or the HMRC mileage allowances as below:

- 45p per mile up to 10,000 miles in the year.
- 25p per mile over 10,000 miles.
- 5p per passenger per mile – passenger supplement.
- 24p per mile for private motor cycles.
- 20p per mile for bicycles.

8. REIMBURSEMENT OF OVERNIGHT SUBSISTENCE when undertaking approved duties: To adopt this provision and to authorise reimbursement of subsistence expenses to members at the maximum rates set out below on the basis of receipted claims:

- £28 per 24-hour period allowance for meals, including breakfast where not provided.
- £200 – London overnight.
- £95 – elsewhere overnight.
- £30 – staying with friends and/or family overnight.

9. COST OF CARE OR PERSONAL ASSISTANCE ALLOWANCE – This provision is mandatory for Councils in Group 2. All relevant authorities must provide a payment towards necessary costs for the care of dependent children and adults (provided by informal or formal carers) and for personal assistance needs as follows:

- Formal (registered with Care Inspectorate Wales) care costs to be paid as evidenced.
- Informal (unregistered) care costs to be paid up to a maximum rate equivalent to [hourly rates as defined by the Living Wage Foundation](#) at the time the costs are incurred.

The Care Allowance must be for the additional costs incurred by members to enable them to carry out official business or approved duties. Each authority must ensure that any payments made are appropriately linked to official business or approved duty. Payment shall only be made on production of receipts from the care provider.

10. MEMBERS IN RECEIPT OF A BAND 1 OR BAND 2 SENIOR SALARY FROM A PRINCIPAL COUNCIL (that is leader, deputy leader or executive member) states that they cannot receive any payment from any community or town council, other than travel and subsistence expenses and contribution towards costs of care and personal assistance.

- 6. CONVERSION OF ACCOUNTS TO AN INCOME AND EXPENDITURE BASIS:** The Clerk advised arrangements were underway for RIALTAS to undertake work in early June 2024 to convert the Council's Alpha Accounting Software package from Receipts and Payments to Income and Expenditure. This will require a backup of all data including the prior years' data, and Rialtas will update the accounts so that the Council's VAT, debtors, creditors, Accruals, receipts in advance and Prepayment are all recorded in the accounts for I&E Reporting. The cost for this conversion work will be £565 plus vat.

RESOLVED that –the Clerk be authorised to arrange for this work to be completed at the cost now stated.

- 7. AUDIT NOTICE 2024:** The Clerk has now received notification of the detailed audit requirements of the External Auditor. Members noted that the Audit would commence on 20 July 2024.

- 8. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023 AND RISK ASSESSMENT REPORT FOR 2023/24:** Members were reminded that due to the Clerk's sickness absence and using annual leave, there had been no capacity since her return to work to carry out the Annual Risk Assessment for the year ended 31 March 2023. The last such detailed report for the year ended 31 March 2022 was reported to the February 2023 Council meeting (Minute 139.3 refers). Going forward the Clerk expects to complete the Statement of Accounts and Annual Risk Assessment as part of the Audit process and report each year to the May/June meeting of the Council.

RESOLVED – that under the circumstances, the Council agrees to an extension for the Clerk to complete this overdue Report and the Annual Risk Assessment for 2022/23 and present it to the April 2024 meeting of the Council.

141. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & PROGRESSION OF ANNUAL REPORT PRIORITIES:

- 1. EVENTS AT ACTON PARK:** Members noted works had been carried out by the Ranger and Friends group to the pathways at Acton Park. In respect of the forthcoming Easter Event which had been widely promoted on Social Media it was noted that the Coffee Van would no longer be available. Members proposed that £50 be allocated to provide Easter Egg prizes should the Ranger need them. The Chair informed Members that the decorative metal fish statue on Acton Park Lake was to be removed from the island at the centre as the island was subsiding. It is to be re-sited at Commonwood Fisheries.
- 2. Gazebo for Park events:** Consideration was given to information provided by Councillor Hardy on the cost of purchasing a Gazebo to be used at Acton Park Events. A three metre by three metre Gazebo, including four sides would cost £500. Printing and a logo would cost an additional £100 and 4 corner weights would cost £120.

RESOLVED – that

- i) £50 out of the Chair's Charity Account be allocated for the purchase of Easter Eggs to be used as prizes at the Easter Event, if the Ranger needs them.***
- ii) The Gazebo now referred to be purchased from within the Community Facilities Budget and stored by the Acton Park Ranger at the Cunliffe Bowling Club Premises where she is based...***

- 3. PROGRESS OF ANNUAL REPORT PRIORITIES:** Councillors Hardy and Edwards had updated the Annual Report, combining the existing content of the Annual report and making new reference to the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 to demonstrate how the Council's work contributes to the objectives set out in it. The Clerk suggested adding the current year approved Budget within the Annual Report for transparency and openness so that Members of the public can see where the Precept is being spent. It was noted the Administration Assistant is updating the Training Plan to reflect in year training completed. The Clerk referred to the Annual Plan Priority for a new Play area in Acton Park Park. In particular Members were reminded of the

Terms of Reference for the Acton Play Areas Task and Finish Group, that it was set up to report back to the Community Council on the three Playgrounds in the Acton Community.

RESOLVED – to thank the Councillors for their input to the Annual report and the Clerk now update and refresh the report with the Financial information, Key Policies, Training Plan and additional Wellbeing matrix items as now discussed.

142. KEY ACTON ISSUES

WCBC Members reported verbally on any new or key issues being considered by the County Borough Council that may affect the whole or part of the Community of Acton as follows:

1. **THE GROVES:** Members noted that there had been no response as yet on the proposal to turn the building into a Museum from the Welsh Government.
2. **LITTER PICK:** Following complaints from Members of the Public about litter, some Members had carried out a litter pick in the local area.
3. **WREXHAM CBC RECYCLING TARGETS:** These targets are to be increased by Welsh Government. Wrexham CBC are currently meeting these targets, but might not in the future resulting in large fines of up to £500,000; this could have financial implications for Wrexham CBC.
4. **MANAGEMENT STRATEGY PLAN:** It was noted that this document includes reference to the Groves and Nine Acre Field and there was movement in respect of the Little Acton Community Centre and the Heads of Terms for a lease or potential for rental of the building. The Community Council may be contacted shortly.

The updates were noted.

143. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Members considered the Clerk’s report detailing the Council’s Policy to apportion the annual £10,000 budget equally between each of the quarterly meetings. Members then proceeded to consider the four applications received during the present quarter and whether the Council wished to make a grant to the applicants under the provisions of Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972. Regard was given to the number of Acton residents catered for by the applicants.

RESOLVED – that the following Financial Assistance grants be made under the Council’s Powers contained in Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) :-

| Organisation | Details | Decision |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| 1. Acton Rainbows | Support to subsidise annual membership fees payable to Girlguiding UK (£56 per person in 2024), to cover increased weekly rent and to continue to offer a varied programme of crafts, themed activities, challenge badges and external visits for the group | £500.00 |
| 2. Urdd Fund for all | Contribution to allow children and young people who live in poverty to have a summer holiday at one of the Urdd’s residential Centres | £200.00 |
| 3. Miners Rescue Project | It is the 90th anniversary of the 1934 Gresford Colliery Disaster in which 266 people died in 1934. A grant is sought towards the cost of design, producing and printing of leaflets and general running costs. | £500.00 |
| 4. Wrexham National Eisteddfod 2025 | Support sought this year and in the next financial year, to help achieve a local target of £400,000. All contributions, big or small, will go entirely to the Wrexham Fund and to the work of the Eisteddfod locally. | £500.00 |

| Organisation | Details | Decision |
|--------------|---------|-----------------|
| | | TOTAL £1,700.00 |

144. REPORT FROM CLERK

The Council received a report from the Clerk detailing correspondence and other information that has been received since the last meeting as follows:

| Organisation | Details |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| CONSULTATIONS: | |
| 1. Wrexham CBC | City Centre Traffic: email dated 23 February 2024 with a link to a consultation on the proposed changes to the Traffic Regulation Orders in Wrexham City Centre. This closes on 25 March 2024. https://www.yourvoicewrexham.com/survey/2055 Received and noted |
| CORRESPONDENCE | |
| 1. Office of Sarah Atherton MP | Wales' Local Places for Nature Capital Fund Reopens for Applications: email dated 16 February 2024 with links https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/funding/local-places-nature to information on this grant. Information noted |
| 2. Play Wales | 1. Consultation on the professional registration of playworkers – our response: email dated 21 February 2024 with a link to download Play Wales' draft response to Play Wales draft response to the Welsh Government consultation on the professional registration of play workers. 2. New play deprivation information sheet: email dated 27 February 2024 with a link to a new information sheet on play deprivation. 3. New magazine: Playing and being well – revisited: email dated 1 March 2024 with a link to the new Playing and Being Well Magazine. 4. Survey – Tell us what you think about our information service: email dated 5 March 2024 requesting completion of a survey. Information noted |
| 3. Planning Aid Wales | 1. Latest news from Planning Aid Wales: email dated 22 February 2024 with the February newsletter from Planning Aid Wales. 2. Latest news from Planning Aid Wales: email dated 29 February 2024 with the latest Newsletter. Information noted |
| 4. Mentor Mon | February Smart Towns Newsletter: email dated 28 February 2024 with an invitation to attend the first Smart Towns Conference which is being held in Ty Pawb in Wrexham on Friday 15 March 2024 Information noted |
| 5. Welsh Government | Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Annual Report - February 2024: email dated 29 February 2024 with a link https://www.gov.wales/independent-remuneration-panel-wales-annual-report-2024-2025 to the annual report. Information noted |
| 6. One Voice Wales | Tiny Forest funding is open! 21st Feb – 8th May: email dated 29 February 2024 with information on grant funding available. Information noted |
| 7. Cadwyn Clwyd | CAPITAL FUNDING: email dated 4 March 2024 with information on grants available via PROSPEROUS COMMUNITIES WREXHAM – Key Fund <u>CAPITAL GRANTS</u> Information noted |

145. PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

The Clerk reported on Payments received and bank charges made since 21 February 2024, and requested authorisation for outstanding debtor or other cheque, BACS and debit card payments as set out in the schedule below:

TRANSFERS – The Clerk proposed movement of a sum of £4,400.00 to the Money Market (Earmarked Reserve) Account from the Deposit (General Fund) Account for the Little Acton Community Centre Refurbishment Fund.

RESOLVED – to approve the making of payments for April 2024 as set out in the schedule below as reported to the Meeting; and to note the payments received; and to authorise the Clerk to arrange a transfer of £4,400 to the Earmarked Reserve for the refurbishment of the Little Acton Community Centre from the Council’s Deposit Account to the Money Market Account which holds the Council’s Earmarked reserves:-

| Voucher/Payment Ref & Payee | Details | Amount |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 110. BACS ref 56.2.24 Viking Office Ltd | Storage cupboard for Little Acton Community Centre S112 Local Government Act 1072 (as amended) | £406.80 (Vat = £67.80) |
| 111. BACS ref 57.3.24 Carole Roberts | Salary and office expenses for March 2024 calculated by the Council’s Agent: Shropshire County Council in accordance with Minute 47 July 2017 Section 112 Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) | (as per payroll schedule) |
| 112. BACS ref 58.3.24 Mr R Hardy | Members Annual Allowance for 2023/24 Section 112 Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) | (as per Payroll schedule) |
| 113. Cheque No 202348 Mr P Lloyd | Members Annual Allowance for 2023/24 Section 112 Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) | (as per Payroll schedule) |
| 114. BACS ref 59.3.24 Michelle Williams | Salary for March 2024 calculated by the Council’s Agent: Shropshire County Council in accordance with Minute 47 July 2017 Section 112 Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) | (as per payroll schedule) |
| 115. BACS ref B60.3.24 Mr A Gallanders | Members Annual Allowance for 2023/24 Section 112 Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) | (as per Payroll schedule) |
| 116. BACS ref B61.3.24 Mrs HM Hewitt | Members Annual Allowance for 2023/24 Section 112 Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) | (as per Payroll schedule) |
| 117. BACS ref B62.3.24 Miss K Speirs | Members Annual Allowance for 2023/24 Section 112 Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) | (as per Payroll schedule) |
| 118. BACS ref B63.3.24 Mr J K Roberts | Members Annual Allowance for 2023/24 Section 112 Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) | (as per Payroll schedule) |
| 119. BACS ref B64.3.24 Clwyd Pension Fund | Pension payments for March 2024 Section 112 Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) | (as per Payroll schedule) |
| 120. BACS ref B65.3.24 HMRC | Payroll payments for March 2024 Section 112 Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) | (as per Payroll schedule) |
| 121. BACS ref B66.3.24 Vision ICT Ltd | Biennial fee gov.uk domain name Section 58 Local Government (Democracy)(Wales) Act 2013 | £76.00 (Vat= £13.00) |
| 122. BACS ref B67.3.24 Vision ICT Ltd | Website Hosting + Support to April 2024 & Email Hosting Section 58 Local Government (Democracy)(Wales) Act 2013 | £710.40 (Vat= £118.40) |
| 123. BACS ref B69.3.24 One Voice Wales | Training Fees for January 2024 Section 19 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 | £78.00 (Vat= £0) |
| 124. BACS ref B69.3.24 One Voice Wales | 2024/25 Membership Fee (5725@39p per dwelling) Section 112 Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) | £2,341.00 (Vat = £0) |
| 125. BACS 70.3.24 Wrexham County Borough Council | Supply & Fit Gate closing mechanism Acton Park Section 19 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 | £530.47 (Vat= £88.41) |

| | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 126. BACS 71.3.24 Wrexham County Borough Council | Supply & Fit Gate replacement flat seat to swing at Acton Park Section 19 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 | £78.50 (Vat= £13.08) |
| 127. BACS 72.3.24 Wrexham County Borough Council | Q4 SLA Costs 3x School Crossing Patrols S137 Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) | £3,499.42 (Vat= £0.00) |
| 128. Cheque No: 202349 Wrexham County Borough Council | SLA Play Services 2023/24 Section 19 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 | £8,237.36 (Vat= £0.00) |
| 129. BACS 73.3.24 Wrexham County Borough Council | 2023/24 Sla costs for CCTV transmission +service Charge Section 19 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 | £2,160.00 (Vat= £360.00) |
| 130. DC 12.2.24 Zoom | Zoom Subscription from 19 March 2024 S112 Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) | £15.59 (VAT= £2.60) |
| 131. Cheque No 202350 Carole Roberts | Clerks Expenses for March 2024 S112 Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) | £15.00 (VAT=£0.00) |
| 132. Cheque No 202351 1 st Acton Rainbows | Financial Assistance/Grant S137 Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) | £500.00 |
| 133. Cheque No 202352 Urdd Gobaith Cymru | Financial Assistance/Grant S137 Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) | £200.00 |
| 134. Cheque No 202353 Wrexham Miners Project | Financial Assistance/Grant S137 Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) | £500.00 |
| 135. Cheque No 202354 Eisteddfod Wrexham | Financial Assistance/Grant to support 2-9 August 2025 Wrexham Eisteddfod S137 Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) | £500.00 |
| Chairs Charity Account | | |
| CCA 8.23/24 Wrexham County Borough Council | Memorial Handkerchief Tree at Acton Park S15 Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) | £354.00 (vat £59.00) |

146. PLANNING RELATED MATTERS AND APPLICATIONS

The Council considered the following matters and applications within the Acton Community area that had been made under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (to be determined by Wrexham County Borough Council):

RESOLVED - that the following observations be made on the applications as set out below:

| Case Number/ Address & Proposed Development | Decision |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Planning Application P/2024/0127 - Valid From 28/02/2024: The Firs, 5 Little Acton Drive, Wrexham, LL12 8DH - works to trees protected by tree preservation order wcbc 149 | No objections subject to the Council's Arboricultural Officer being satisfied that the works are necessary and are carried out under his direction |
| 2. Planning Application P/2024/0101 - Valid From 01/03/2024: Tapley Avenue Childrens Centre, 45 Tapley Avenue, Wrexham, LL12 7UY - discharge of condition 3 (biodiversity) of planning permission p/2023/0150 | Information only No observations |

147. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC:

RESOLVED - that the press and public be excluded from the Meeting during consideration of the next item of business only as it is likely that, if they were present, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in the Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960.

148. STAFFING COMMITTEE MINUTES OF THE MEETING ADJOURNED ON 6 DECEMBER 2023 AND RECONVENED ON 13 MARCH 2024

The Confidential Minutes and recommendations from the Staffing Committee meeting adjourned on 6 December 2023 and reconvened on 13 March 2024 were received.

RESOLVED – that

- i) the Confidential Minutes of the Staffing Committee meeting adjourned on 6 December 2023 and reconvened on 13 March 2024 be received and noted;***
- ii) the outcomes of the Clerk’s appraisal be noted; and***
- iii) Michelle Williams the Administrative Assistant be awarded one increment from 1 April 2024.***

***Councillor Kevin Roberts
Chair***

Signed as a correct record this 17th day of April 2024

Presiding Chair

DOCUMENT IS RESTRICTED

1. ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2023/24:

A pdf copy of the Year End Bank Reconciliation and spending progress against the 2023/24 Budget will be circulated separately to members

It should be noted that the accounts will be submitted to the Council's Internal Auditor on a date yet to be agreed. Audit Wales, the External Auditor has given notice that they will undertake a triennial full audit for 2023-24 and all relevant documents must be submitted by no later than week commencing 8 July 2024.

2. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023 AND ANNUAL RISK ASSESSMENT REPORT: Further to Minute 140.8 March 2024, to receive and approve this Report. (Please note this lengthy document is now attached to this agenda)

3. COMMUNITY AGENT – MONTHLY REPORT FOR MARCH 2024: To receive and approve the attached report.

4. INSURANCE PROVIDER AND COVER FROM 1 JUNE 2024 – The Council in 2021 entered into a three year contract with Zurich Municipal Insurance Company for the provision of Local Council Insurance Services commencing 1 June 2021. This resulted in an overall budget saving. The Clerk will provide information about the insurance renewal schedule received, the level of cover and other options available to the Council at the meeting.

*The Council is **RECOMMENDED** to authorise the Clerk to obtain quotes from other sector specific companies to enable the Council to review and confirm its insurance cover requirements before the renewal date of 1 June 2024.*

DELAYED 2023/24 REPORT: Each financial year the Council is required under the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014, issued under the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 to:

1. prepare accounting statements for the Annual Return;
2. prepare a supporting governance statement by completing the relevant sections of the Annual Return. This is an assessment by the Council that it has conducted its business in accordance with the law and proper standards; has safeguarded and properly accounted for public money; used its resources economically, efficiently and effectively. The governance statement should enable the Council to respond yes to any assertion on the Annual Return; and
3. enable interested parties and local electors to exercise their rights with regard to the annual accounts under the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004.

The Council has already considered and approved a Statement of the Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023. (Minute 20.2 June 2023 refers) This information was included in the Annual Return which summarises the financial results of the Council. The Audit Manager for Audit Wales concluded his Audit of the Council's Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023 and has confirmed an unqualified opinion albeit with some advice for future years.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To enable Members to consider the 2023/24 supporting statement and Annual Risk assessment that the Community Council is required to prepare in accordance with, and in the form specified in, any Annual Return required by proper practices in relation to accounts.

DECISIONS REQUIRED

- i) To consider, and if appropriate approve the Supporting Statement and the Annual Risk Assessment required under the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 and proper practices as set out in Appendix 1 of the Report ;
- ii) That consideration of the report as contained in Appendix 2 be accepted as the formal Risk Assessment for 2023/24;
- iii) That in relation to the key risks, these be identified as relating to the Community Council's assets, bank accounts, internal financial controls and insurance cover for statutory and other purposes;
- iv) That the arrangements highlighted in Appendix 2 be accepted as having taken all the appropriate steps to minimise risks in conjunction with the documented Internal Financial Controls.
- v) To assert that the Community Council has awarded one contract during 2023/24 and therefore evidence is required to support the Annual Governance Statement on part 2 of the Annual return for 2023/24

INFORMATION

1. Small bodies such as this Community Council have a legal responsibility to put in place proper arrangements to ensure the proper conduct of their financial affairs, and to monitor the adequacy and effectiveness of those arrangements in practice.
2. The Community Council must ensure it has proper governance practices in that it must approve a budget prepared in accordance with the Local Government finance Act 1992. Following approval, the Council must ensure that the precept issued to the billing authority is for the net budget requirements determined as part of the budget approval. The Council must ensure that it

monitors its financial position against the approved budget periodically through the financial year. Such consideration should not be less than quarterly.

3. The Community Council is responsible for putting in and ensuring there is a sound system of internal control. Members are jointly and individually responsible for putting proper governance arrangements in place to safeguard public funds. The internal controls provide assurance that the Council maintains proper accounting records and control systems and maintains an adequate system of internal audit of those accounting records and control systems. The Community Council meets its responsibilities by focusing on control areas that are relevant to it, for example:-
 - i) the adoption of up to date Standing orders and financial regulations, /procedures;
 - ii) controls being in place for all cash and income received,
 - iii) Expenditure control to ensure only necessary and authorised purchases are made and all payments are reported to a Council meeting;
 - iv) Payroll control and to ensure the Council is not exposed to additional liabilities from breaches of statutory regulations
 - v) Safeguarding of Assets and Investments held by the Council from loss or damage and to ensure their proper use within the community and maintaining an Asset Register
 - vi) Safeguarding of Investments and setting of an Investment Policy
 - vii) Bank Accounts – controls to ensure that the amount of money held at any given time can be identified and is secure
4. The Council must ensure that it considers the statutory powers it relies on when making decisions. As a public body the Council is expected to conduct its activities lawfully. There are three aspects it needs to consider to ensure it acts in a lawful manner namely, does the Council have the power to act? Has the Council acted reasonably and has the Council exercised its discretion to act fairly? The 2019 Practitioners Guide states that all Councils are required to ensure they are aware of, and have regard to, the legal power they exercise when deciding on any action, including decisions to spend public money. Councils usually act within their powers (intra-vires) in day to day operations. However for new or innovative functions Councils need to ensure they have fully considered the statutory power that will allow them to undertake the function. Where there is uncertainty over the vires available or where the decision will result in significant sum of money being spent or where there is some controversy over the proposed activities Councils should seek legal advice before making decisions.
5. The Council meets some of its responsibilities by preparing, publishing, and providing the Auditor with the accounts prepared for the financial year, together with such additional information, Governance Statements and explanations as is necessary to provide sufficient evidence that it has maintained adequate systems of internal control and internal audit throughout the financial year.
6. The Council's appointed Internal Auditor, JDH Business Services, undertook the Internal Audit on 7 June 2023 and his report and recommendations were considered at the June 2023 Meeting of the Council, (Minute 20.1 refers). In accordance with the requirements of Regulation 15(1) of the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 (as amended) the Clerk as the Responsible Financial Officer of the Council signed and dated the statement of accounts, and certified that it properly presented the Council's receipts and payments for the year. Additionally in accordance with the requirements of Regulation 15(2) of the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 (as amended) and following the certification by the Responsible Financial Officer, the Council must **approve** the accounts. The Regulations require that this must be completed **by 30 June each year**.
7. The Auditor General for Wales confirmed the appointment of 11 September 2023 as the date from which electors can exercise their rights under sections 30 and 31 of the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 to ask questions or make objections to the accounts to the Auditor General. The relevant Public Notice

advertising Local Government Electors' right to Inspect and ask the Auditor questions about the accounts was placed on display within the relevant timeframes.

8. The Annual Return and accompanying information included explanations of significant variances on the Accounting statements, an Annual Governance statement with assertions for Part 1. In respect of Part 2 the Annual Governance Statement, the Community Council provided the required information before 30 September 2022 together with more detailed explanations as requested by the External Auditor.
- 9 The Summary of receipts and payments for the year ended 31 March 2023 was considered by the Council at its April 2023 meeting together with the detailed receipts and payments by Budget headings (Minute 170 refers) A copy of the Asset Register was submitted to the Internal Auditor. Attached at Appendix 1 is the supporting statement for the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023 and the formal Risk Assessment for 2023 is attached at Appendix 2.

**ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023 and 31 MARCH 2024
SUPPORTING STATEMENT****BORROWINGS**

At the close of business on 31 March 2023 and March 2024 there were no outstanding loans

LEASES

At 31 March 2023 and 31 March 2024, there were no leases in operation

GRANTS

The Council did not secure any Grants during 2022/23 or 2023/24.

INTEREST ON INVESTMENTS

The Council approves its Annual Investment Strategy as part of its budget and Precept setting process in December or January each year taking account of the current economic situation and slight increase in interest rates. The last review was in January 2024

DEBTS OUTSTANDING

At 31 March 2023, an anticipated refund of £8,7585.22 was due in respect of VAT paid during 2022/23 from HM Revenue and Customs. The claim for this refund was submitted and the refund received. The next claim for 2023/24 for £11,380.17 will be made shortly. In respect of 2024/25 claims may be made once the minimum level for reclaiming VAT is reached or at the end of the financial year.

TENANCIES

At 31 March 2023 and 31 March 2024, no tenancies have been entered into either as a tenant or a landlord

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

The Clerk's salary costs, office expenses and Real Time PAYE Payments (RTI) and returns to HMRC are administered through a three year Service Level to 31 March 2024 with Shropshire Council who undertakes a Payroll Bureau role on behalf of the Community Council.

The Community Council has a limited budget provision of £3,400 for Members Remuneration/ Expenses in accordance with some of the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel. In 2022/23 a sum of £510.00 was paid to members in respect of the £150 expenses and carers allowances. In 2023/24 a sum of £728 was paid in respect of £156 expenses and £52 towards the cost of office consumables.

The Service Level Agreement has an administration charge and also ensures the Council's payments through the Payroll system to meet HMRC requirements. In accordance with the provisions of Section 151 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, and the requirement of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales, the Council ensures it publishes by 30 September following the end of the year to which the payments relate, a return in respect of the remuneration received by its members and co-opted members.

The Chair's Charity Account was replenished during 2022/23 and 2024/25.

PENSIONS

The Pensions Act 2011 and Workplace Pensions Regulations require that all eligible employees **must** be enrolled in a pension scheme by the Council's staging date which was 1 July 2016. This duty was met by joining the Clwyd Local Government Pension Scheme on 1 April 2016. The 2022/23 Employers

contribution rate was 22.9% and an annual one off payment of £200.00 must be paid each April for three years from 2020 following the Actuaries 2019 Review of the Council's Pension Fund to mitigate the Council's Pension liabilities from 2020/21 until the next three year review in 2022. The review in 2022 increased the employers contribution rate to 25.8% and a one off deficit recovery amount of £560 was made in April 2023 making a saving of £40 over the three year actuarial valuation period to 2025.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

These payments reflect the Clerk's Membership of the Society of Local Council Clerks and decision of the Council to join One Voice Wales from 1 October 2019. (Minute 52.1.ii September 2019 refers)

INSURANCES

The Community Council as part of its Risk Management process conducts market testing and a review of its Insurance cover arrangements. The three year contract with Zurich Municipal Insurance Company for the provision of Local Council Insurance Services from 1 June 2021 ends on 31 May 2024.

The Council conducted further market testing of sector specific insurance companies in May 2021 (Minute 9.5 refers) together with a review of the level of cover to be provided and other options available to the Council by two sector specific Insurance Companies, namely Came and Co. and BHIB Council's insurance. Both Companies declined to quote to provide the Council's insurance services from 1 June 2021. Accordingly the Council confirmed the level of Insurance cover as set out in the Policy renewal Documents be confirmed as being adequate to meet the Council's requirements and the Zurich Municipal Insurance Company continue as the Council's insurance provider for a further three year period to 31 May 2024.

Each year at renewal the Council reviews its insurance cover for several types of inherent risks including the protection of physical assets, the risk of damage to a third party property or individuals, the risk of consequential loss of income or the need to provide essential services following critical damage, the loss of cash through theft or dishonesty (fidelity guarantee), legal liability as a consequence of asset ownership (public liability) and employers' liability insurance.

A separate stand-alone Cyber Security Insurance policy has been taken out and renewed annually with Gallaghers since 1 September 2019. The level of Insurance cover as set out in the Policy Documents is confirmed as being adequate to meet the Council's requirements.

ELECTIONS

The last Full Council Elections were held in May 20 have been filled through Co-option and there has been no call to spend against this budget. Historically until the 2017 Council elections, the Council added any underspend on this budget to Earmarked balances to smooth out the costs that may be incurred if all six wards are contested at the next full Council elections. The £28,000 earmarked provision was reviewed in December 2022 and was reduced to £15,000. This reserve is being kept under review so that future Election costs can continue to be smoothed out. The next full Council elections will be held in May 2027.

AUDIT FEES

The actual cost of Internal and External Audit work is charged to the Council rather than a scale of fees dependent on the level of the Council's precept. No extra fees were incurred for additional audit work in respect of the 2022/23 and 2023/24 accounts.

S137 PAYMENTS

The Council's Budget Allocations for Donations (s137) have been much less than the limit permitted by Section 137(4) (a) of the Local Government Act 1972. For Parish and Town Councils in England and Wales, an amount of £8.82 in 2022/23 and £9.93 in 2023/24 per person of the Community Councils' population was permissible. The total number of Acton Community electors at 1 January 2022 was 10,40 and in January 2023 was 10,374. This enabled the Community Council to incur expenditure (up to £91,763.28 in

2022/23 and £103,013.82 in 2023/24), which in their opinion is in the interests of, and will bring direct benefit to their area or any part of it or all or some of its inhabitants.

The total amount spent by Acton Community Council during 2022/23 using its S137 powers was **£ 28,094.18** which is well within the permitted limit and in 2023/24 . This expenditure is summarized in the receipts and payments schedule as:

2022/23

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Total Donations under S137 Powers for 2022/23 | £4,775.00 |
| Total other spending during 2022/23 | £2,393.68 |
| SLA costs for School Crossing Patrols in the Acton Community | £ 20,925.50 |
| Total | £28,094.18 |

The total amount spent by Acton Community Council during 2023/24 using its S137 powers was **£ 15,568.42** which is well within the permitted limit and in 2023/24 . This expenditure is summarized in the receipts and payments schedule as:

2023/24

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Total Donations under S137 Powers for 2023/24 | £6,870.00 |
| Total other spending during 2022/23 | £0.00 |
| SLA costs for School Crossing Patrols in the Acton Community | £ 8,698.42 |
| Total | £15,568.42 |

Expenditure under Section 137(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 must benefit people in the area on activities or projects not specifically covered or authorised by other powers. This figure is reviewed annually and notified to the Council in January each year. The Community Council has used its Section 137 Powers during 2022/23 and 2024/25 to fund and ensure there is continued provision of the four School Crossing Patrols in the Acton Community as the specific powers in respect of this provision lie with the Principal Authority.

CONFERENCE FEES

During 2022/23 the Clerk to the Council attended the SLCC’s Practitioners, Welsh Regional and Annual Conferences together with the One Voice Wales Larger Council’s Conference. During 2023/24, the Clerk attended the SLCC Conference in person and the Joint Welsh Conference remotely at a greatly reduced cost. This Budget provision is for the Clerk and Councillors to attend Conferences.

ADVERTISING AND PUBLICITY

No statutory expenditure was required under this provision in 2022/23 and 2023/24

TRAINING

The Council has a Statutory Straining plan in place and this provision is for the training requirements of the Clerk and Councillors. In 2022/23 and 2023/24 several of the Community Councillors and the Clerk to the Council have attended the One Voice Wales training courses that were provided remotely.

WEBSITE - DESIGN ETC.

This budget provides for the Community Council’s costs associated with its website to ensure compliance with sections 55-57 of the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013. The Vision ICT package provided to Acton Community Council is a real time daily data backup option that includes disaster recovery and business continuity. The Community Council pays for its .gov.uk domain registration fee from this budget. Work is now complete on ensuring compliance with the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018.

ACTON COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTRE –REVENUE CONTRIBUTIONS

This budget heading provided for the revenue running costs of the Acton Community Resource Centre as set out in a ten year Service Level Agreement entered into from April 2013. It provided for an annual

Revenue funding commitment of up to £30,000 to the Acton Community Resource Centre as set out in the Service Level Agreement that ended in March 2023. The Council decided not to renew the Service Level Agreement and the final £30,000 payment was made in 2022/23.

A short term six month licence agreement for office space was entered into at a cost of £200 per month from 1 April 2024. The Council vacated its office in August 2023 and the six month Licence was not renewed.

YOUNG PERSONS PROJECTS

This budget provides for

1. Service Level Agreement with the Caia Park Partnership to operate a Youth Work Project to provide Open Youth Clubs for 8-13 and 13-18 year olds at the Acton Community Resource Centre.
2. Service Level Agreement with Wrexham CBc Play Development Team for a pilot Playwork project to encourage and support children to play out earlier and more often.

The Community Council's Youth Committee meets on a quarterly basis to develop the Young Persons Projects and to closely monitor the performance reports submitted in accordance with the Service Level Agreements.

There is an earmarked reserve of £5,908.49 set aside in 2016/17 to be used as a contribution towards the costs of the Youth Provision Project and to provide for any equipment, storage, Information Technology or other costs associated with the Project (Minute 119.3.i).2 February 2017, Minute 141 March 2017 and Minute 155vi April 2018 refers). There is also an earmarked reserve of £1,185 set aside for Play Development

SEASONAL RANGER – ACTON PARK

This budget provides funding for a permanent full time Park Ranger at Acton Park. The Community Council has a Service Level Agreement with Wrexham County Borough Council and annually, pays the actual costs retrospectively for this post. Over the years of operation, this seasonal post has engaged with Park users and proved to be effective and popular. There is a sum of £1,900 in the Sla for the events the Ranger organises each year. Vat is charged for this service. In accordance with the Service Level Agreement, the Council receives a detailed report in September and at the end of March each year on the Activities, events and other work carried out by the Seasonal Ranger.

COMMUNITY ADVICE SERVICE

This budget provision meets the Service Level Agreement requirements with the Wrexham Citizens Advice Bureaux to provide an outreach worker within the Acton Community. The cost of this Service reflects additional costs that are incurred by the Service provider for room hire at the Acton Community Resource Centre. The 3 year Service Level Agreement is effective until 31 March 2026 (Minute 113.2.5 January 2023 refers). The Council receives quarterly performance reports and monitors the operation of the Service Level Agreement.

MAESYDRE POWER HOUSE

This budget provision is made to provide for the cost of general repairs, maintenance and repainting works to the fabric of the building and a three to five year revaluation of the building. The building was previously repaired and repainted in October 2010. A detailed surveyor report was obtained from Legat Owen during 2011/12. The building was subsequently re-valued by the same Valuer in March 2016 and March 2022 via a table top review. The insurance valuation reflects the total rebuild costs excluding VAT and during 2023/24 was £223,020.00

The annual budget also provides for earmarking of an apportionment of the expected peaks in expenditure. Such payments may include repair works or legal, surveyors or other professional costs incurred in drawing up a scheme of works to undertake repairs to the roof and external paintwork and associated scaffold costs. During 2019/20 a full Condition Survey of the Building was carried out and the Council has authorised the Clerk to the Council to make the necessary preparations to go out to tender

and for the Council to carry out the works identified in the Survey to ensure the building stays wind and water tight (Minute 156 May 2020 refers). This work was completed during 2023.

ACTON PLAY PROVISION

This budget was created in 2014. The three Play grounds in Acton are owned by Wrexham County Borough Council. The Community Council has entered into a Service Level Agreement with Wrexham County Borough Council to safeguard Community Facilities in the Acton Community and provide funding to ensure the Children's Playgrounds at Aran Road, Ffordd Llewelyn and at Acton Park are retained and receive regular inspections and maintenance. The Community Council instructs Wrexham County Borough Council under the terms of the SLA to carry out the necessary repairs, replacement of swing chains etc. and painting to remedy the items highlighted in the annual inspection reports or as a result of vandalism damage.

The 2022/23 budget of £16,515.00 provided for the SLA costs and any set aside of residue budget after repairs/replacement to play equipment to build up a fund to smooth out the future costs of replacing damaged, aging and upgrading obsolete play equipment at the Play areas subject to the SLA. The earmarked reserve for replacement equipment currently stands at £76,869.58.

SCHOOL CROSSING PATROLS

This budget provision was created in 2014 and uses powers under Section 137(1) Local Government Act 1972 (as amended). It reflects the Community Council entering into a Service Level Agreement with Wrexham County Borough Council to continue to provide four School Crossing patrols at Dean Road, Barkers Lane, Box Lane and Borrass Park Infants and Junior Schools which have been identified in Traffic and Pedestrian Surveys as needing safe crossing points. Several posts have remained vacant despite being advertised resulting in substantial savings to the cost of the Crossing patrols during 2022/23 and 2023/24.

LITTLE ACTON COMMUNITY CENTRE

The Community Council has made this provision to enable the Council to fund the full running costs of the Little Acton Community Centre and ensure it remains open. Since 2016/17, the total expenditure reflects the reduced running costs as a Voluntary Group now manage and arrange for the Caretaking of the Centre. The Council agreed in December 2016 to commit to fund the Voluntary Group's Project plan for the Little Acton Community Centre for three years. (Minute 102.3.ii December 2016 refers).

A small Task and Finish Group has investigated, collated information, (Minute 87.2 December 2018 refers) and reported its findings back to the Community Council on a Condition Survey that has been carried out, the asset transfer of the Little Acton Community Centre from Wrexham County Borough Council to the small Voluntary Group currently running it or to the Community Council itself. There is an action plan for a public consultation exercise, preparation of a business plan and legal work to be undertaken. The Council agreed to proceed to enter into a 25 year Lease Agreement with Wrexham County Borough Council from 1 April 2020 to take over responsibility for the Little Acton Community Centre and authorised the Task & Finish Group to proceed as a matter of urgency to implement the action points agreed by the Community Council in October 2019 (Minute 129 January 2020 refers). The Public Consultation is still to be concluded as the Covid pandemic delayed progress. The small group was refreshed at the Annual Council meeting in May 2023 and will re-commence work shortly.

The invoice for quarter 4 SLA costs for 2019/20 was delayed and the remaining budget sum of £4,063.00 was moved to a Covid 19 specific earmarked reserve (Minute 152.2 May 2020 refers). Subsequently the Council redesignated the remaining reserve as "LACC Equipment Refurbishment" and has regularly added to this reserve from the remaining Budget provision. The Earmarked reserve for the Acton Community Resource Centre was moved across to the Little Acton Reserve in 2022/23. A further addition of £4,400 was made to the reserve in 2023/24 The reserve currently stands at £38,125.89.

COMMUNITY STREETSCENE

The Council's former Environmental Committee was established in May 2016 to consider and determine its Policy and Priorities for Environmental projects. However, as it consistently underspent its budget, the

Committee was not re-appointed in May 2018. Instead the Council can consider Environmental bids of up to £1,000 for each of the five wards in the Acton Community. The previous year Budget under spends of £4,750.00 in 2016/17 and £1,968.50 in 2017/18 are held in an earmarked reserve for Environmental works previously approved for each of the five wards. (Minute 119.2.i).4 February 2016 & Minute 141 March 2016 refers).

CRIME PREVENTION PROJECTS

The Council agreed in September 2019 to enter into a Service Level Agreement with Wrexham County Borough Council to provide and install a CCTV camera in the sunken gardens at Maesydre off Park Avenue Wrexham linked to the Main Police Control Room following consultation by the Acton Police Officers (Minute 120.3 January 2020 refers). . The CCTV became operational part way through 2020/21 and the Camera was moved during 2023/24 to its current position on Penymaes Avenue.

EXTERNAL GRANT EXPENDITURE

No grant funding bids have been submitted during 2019/20 or 2020/21. Following successful bids in 2017 and 2018 for Play Sufficiency Grant funding, a total of £1,060 was spent in 2018/19 to purchase the remaining equipment for the Ffordd Garmonydd play area extension for older children. There is still a sum of £560 held in an earmarked reserve for the provision of children playing signs at Overton Way, Wrexham

AGENCY WORK

During the year the Council undertook no Agency Work.

CONTINGENCY LIABILITIES

There are no contingency liabilities for which provision has not been made in the accounts.

GENERAL FUND BALANCE

The full details of the Council's balances to 31 March 2024 have been reported earlier in the Meeting with the Q\$ Accounts to 31 March 2024. The balances were reviewed on 3 January 2023 (Minute 116 refers) as part of the Budget and precept setting process. The current level of un-year marked General Reserve Fund Balances is within the scale required under accounting good practice. Provision for General Fund balances was made during 2022/23 and 2023/24 such provision will in subsequent years be considered and increased if deemed appropriate from within the Community Council's precepting requirements to ensure good practice is maintained.

End of supporting statements to the Accounts for 2022/23 and 2023/24

Carole Roberts, Clerk to the Council

17 April 2024

**REPORT OF RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER
FORMAL RISK ASSESSMENT – APRIL 2024**

Introduction

1. The Community Council is required under the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 (as amended) to facilitate arrangements for the management of risk and carry out a formal Risk Assessment annually which should be recorded in its minutes. The Assessment should identify the key risks that the Community Council is facing, evaluate the consequences of an identified risk taking place and decide on the appropriate action the Community Council should take to reduce or control the risk and improve the Council's stewardship of public funds and provides positive and continuing assurance to taxpayers. . The latter is addressed partly by review of insurance, including fidelity, public liability and property. It has been past practice for the Council to consider a report prepared by the Clerk and Chief Financial Officer to meet the requirements of the recommendation. The report is appended below.
2. The 2019 Practitioners Guide that has previously been referred to by the Internal Auditor has sections setting out aspects of risk assessment including cause, mitigations, likelihood and significance or impact. The statutory risk assessment can be managed through a combination of effective internal controls and specific actions to address the risks identified. Internal Audit can provide assurance on the effectiveness of the arrangements in place. The three main types of decision that the Council can take in relation to managing risk, having considered the controls which they need to have in place, can be broken down into three parts, namely; areas where there may be scope to use Insurance to Manage Risk; areas where there may be scope to work with third parties to help manage risk and areas where there may be a need to self-manage risk.

Areas where there may be scope to use Insurance to Manage Risk;

3. The Community Council owns one building, the Maesydre Power House. There was a full Condition Survey of the building carried out in 2019/20 by a Chartered Building Surveyor the findings of which were considered by the Council in May 2020. The Council resolved that the Clerk should make arrangements for the repairs and improvements identified in the Survey to be carried out as soon as possible to keep the building wind and water tight. (Minute 156 May 2020 refers). However during 2020/21 this work was unable to progress due to the Covid lockdown and furlough restrictions. This work and refurbishment to the Power House was completed during 2023
4. The Community Council is responsible entirely for this building and ensures through its insurance cover with Zurich Municipal there is no risk of loss or damage or risk to a third party property or individual (public liability) . It has set up an earmarked contingency within its budget for any urgent repairs to the roof etc. This reserve was depleted during 2023 and the costs incurred in the painting and repairs to the building. The buildings insurance cover is included within the Local Council Policy schedule with Zurich Municipal. The insurance cover reflects the current total rebuild cost valuation as set out in the Council's Policy. Each year until there is a revaluation, the property sum insured will be uplifted by the appropriate index linking percentages for each year. The Community Asset Register value of the Building is £121,021.00. The Council's internal controls require an up to date register of assets and investment, regular maintenance arrangements for physical assets an annual review of risk and the adequacy of cover and ensuring the robustness of insurance providers
5. The Council's Local Council Policy with Zurich Municipal provides a long term agreement that is active until 1 June 2024 renewable each year. The single policy provides cover for the protection of physical assets owned by the Council such as the Maesydre Power House, and any Assets such as bus shelters, street furniture (including seats or litter bins) through the Property Schedule for material damage, whilst the Office equipment and the Chairman's Badge of Office is covered by All Risks. The Policy includes £250,000 cover each for Officials Indemnity, Libel and Slander, and money and a £500,000 fidelity guarantee together with £10million mandatory cover in relation to public liability and

employers' liability. There is also cover for personal accident to the Clerk and Members of the Council up to 90 years of age and legal expenses. As the Community Council does not engage in any trading activities, the risk of business interruption with consequential loss of income or the need to provide essential services is negligible and does not apply.

6. Business interruption event or loss for a cyber event that causes any unplanned system outage or network interruption: The Council entered into a standalone policy with Came and Company in 2019/20 for the provision of Cyber Liability Cover and this was last renewed in August 2023.
7. The Council in May 2018 assessed its risks following the introduction of GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 and received regular updates on implementation of the recommendations from the Internal Auditor. The Council in addressing and implementing the recommendations made following the Internal Audit, has implemented risk assessments, security and internal controls to meet the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 namely adequate provision within the Budget, the review of Data Protection related Policies, appointment of a Data Protection Officer, implementation and activation of gov.uk official emails for all Members of the Council and arranged for inclusion of an SSL Certificate, Privacy statement and consent element of the contact form on the Council's website. There is ongoing work to ensure compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations and in particular the electronic archiving of documents. The Council has received confirmation that its website is GDPR Compliant.
8. In relation to the internal controls specified in the Practitioners Guide, the following comments are made:-
 - 8.1. An up to date register of assets is prepared annually and cover for the assets increased in line with insurance recommendations. Other than the three Bank accounts with HSBC there are no further investments held by the Council that would require recording in a register. The Council also approves its Investment Strategy each year when considering its spending proposals and precept requirements for the next Financial Year
 - 8.2. The level of insurance cover for the various sections is reported to the Council annually by the Responsible Financial Officer as part of a review of risk and to ensure adequacy of cover; during 2021/22 a full review and formal quotations were sought from sector specific insurers to test the market. At its June 2021 meeting the Council entered into a further 3 year Contract with Zurich Municipal to provide its Insurance services
 - 8.3. Review of Cover – supplier onboarding and prevention of fraud- This was highlighted as a recommendation by the Internal Auditor in his report dated 2 June 2021. Zurich Municipal do not provide this cover and mitigation against this risk is deal with in the third section of self managing risk.
 - 8.4. Zurich Insurance Group was established in 1874 and has since 1993 been providing a dedicated Municipal risk and insurance service for Parish, Town and Community Councils in England and Wales and is one of the main providers for Parish, Town and Community Councils.
 - 8.5. The Council's internal controls provide for internal audit testing to include: annual review of the internal controls in place; review of management arrangements including the insurance cover referred to in 8.2 and 8.3 above; testing of specific internal controls and reporting findings to the Council. The internal Auditors report and recommendations was considered by the Community Council at its June 2021 meeting.

Areas where there may be scope to work with others (third parties) to help manage the risk

9. There is little the Community Council need to assess in relation to this section as they have no amenities, war memorials or equipment that requires security or maintenance. They do not provide services under any agency or partnership agreements. There is no borrowing or lending in relation to banking arrangements nor ad-hoc provision of amenities/facilities for events of local groups. The Community Council has no markets management, vehicle or equipment lease or hire or trading units. In relation to professional services, the Community Council agrees annually the appointment of an

Internal Auditor to comply with the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2013. It will also instruct the Clerk to obtain professional services such as those required for the preparation of tender documents and project management of a scheme of works for the Maesydre Power House.

10. In relation to internal controls, the Community Council at its Annual Meeting in May 2023 reviewed and adopted the Standing Orders Model prepared by One Voice Wales. It has previously revised its Financial Regulations to include provision for electronic payment of Accounts and to incorporate changes resulting from the introduction of the Data Protection Act 2018. The Council considered its banking arrangements in May 2019. It arranged for Internet Banking to be set up in 2019 and this online facility is being used in accordance with the Council's revised Financial Regulations and payments authorised by two of the Council's four signatories are reported to the Council each month and recorded in the minutes
11. The Council now has a debit card for use by the Clerk up to a maximum transaction of £300. All expenditure is reported to the next Council meeting and recorded in the Minutes. This has enabled the Council to purchase goods and services online such as the Zoom subscription.
12. **Risk assessment for Supplier (procurement) fraud including the adequacy of supplier onboard controls:** This was highlighted as a recommendation by the Internal Auditor in June 2021. The Community Council is aware of Supplier fraud. However the bulk of the Council's annual expenditure is in respect of service level agreements and payments via cheque to small organisations that have applied for grants. A separate file is kept that contains details of all the electronic payments and BACS beneficiary lists during each financial year. The majority of BACS payments are for payroll and are calculated by Shropshire Council under a Service Level Agreement.
13. To mitigate risk any changes to bank accounts requested once an invoice has been received will result in a stop being placed on the payment being authorised to enable further detailed checks to be made to ensure no fraud is possible. The Clerk and RFO will continue to be trained in Cyber security awareness. HSBC the Council's banker does use confirmation of payee and it has been active and used when setting up the new payees for BACS payments during 2022/23 and 2023/24.
14. The Council at its annual meeting in May 2021 reviewed its insurance cover and in particular as part of a three year review, the Clerk & RFO asked about supplier fraud cover which is not provided by Zurich the Council's Insurers. The Council also has a separate Cyber Insurance Policy with Gallaghers (Came and Company) that expires in August each year. The Internal Auditor's suggestion about checking new supplier's credentials via Companies House has been noted and will now be included as a requirement to be undertaken as part of the risk assessment prior to any new suppliers' payments being authorised.
15. The Council receives regular performance reports in respect of several of its Service Level Agreements with the Caia Park Partnership, Wrexham CAB and Wrexham County Borough Council where quarterly and annual reporting is stipulated,
16. The other aspects included in the Practitioners' Guide are not applicable to the Community Councils own particular circumstances. As Responsible Financial Officer I carry out regular bank reconciliation and report on a quarter end basis to the Council, which is checked and signed off by Councillor Corin Jarvis each month and independently reviewed by the Internal Auditor.

The Council has used the Alpha Financial Management Software from Rialtas since the 2016/17 Financial Year. The Package provides ongoing annual support and maintenance and options for either an Income and Expenditure and Receipts and Payments systems; Single entry through a simple cash book updates all reports; VAT reclaim compiled in a form acceptable to HM Revenue & Customs; All payments are automatically marked off against estimates; ability to set up next year estimates during the current year; All year-end accounts are guaranteed acceptable to audit. There are training modules

available to use this package fully and as a contingency/disaster planning model, in the event of the Clerk being absent for a prolonged period of time, further assistance and support is available from Rialtas to fully establish any intermediary Officers on keeping the Council's accounts up to date on this system.

Areas where there may be a need to Self-manage Risk

17. As the Responsible Financial Officer, I use the Rialtas Receipts and Payments Cash Book to enter all income and expenditure which ensures adequate working papers are available and to assist in the preparation of estimates of income and expenditure. As the Clerk and Proper Officer to the Council, I ensure that any activities undertaken by the Community Council are within the legal powers applicable, including data protection, employment law, Inland Revenue requirements and custom and exercise regulations. The powers under which expenditure is being approved is recorded in the minutes.
18. To contain any risks in respect of payroll, the service is outsourced through a Service Level Agreement to Shropshire Council's payroll department ensuring probity, timely and correct submission of real time and year-end returns to HMRC. The Council has appointed a Staffing Committee which ensure the current workload is dealt with in a timely fashion. The Clerk's hours of work are kept under review in consultation with the Chairman to ensure that workload demands and future needs can be met. A job evaluation and review of the Administrative function of the Council was carried out by the Staffing Committee in September 2021. There is provision in the Council's Standing orders for a yearly review of the Clerk to enable any changes to be included as part of the budget setting process and ensure that adequate provision is made within the estimates of income and expenditure. The Clerk's last Personal and Development Review was carried out in November 2023.
19. To ensure that current and best practice is being used by the Council, the Clerk has received training by the SLCC on Financial Management which reviewed the Public Accountability Framework, Year-end Statement of Accounts and ensured proper financial practices. The Clerk as part of her ongoing continuing professional Development and training also attends the quarterly Clwyd Branch meetings of the Society and has participated in Regional, Annual and Practitioners conferences of the Society and jointly with One Voice Wales to keep abreast of innovation and changes within the Sector.
20. The Community Council does not undertake any borrowings, and the determination of the annual precept is generally the subject of a detailed estimates report to a special meeting in November each year and to the December meeting of the Council to give final approval to the Estimates of income and Expenditure, Earmarked reserves and precept requirements. As part of the Budget setting timetable all members are provided each year with a copy of the precise powers granted to the Council under which expenditure can be approved
21. Each year the Council reviews its priorities, spending powers, current budget headings, and Earmarked Reserves to inform the budget setting process. The Council in December 2022 0 and January 2024 considered current and known new expenditure requirements together with the various Service Level Agreements, the draft report and financial implications of the Independent Remuneration Panel's recommendations.
22. The Council has no Partnership Agreements, and therefore no monitoring requirements. The Council as previously stated does receive regular statistical, performance and other information about each of the Service Level Agreements that the Community Council has entered into through reporting and measurement requirements that monitor the effectiveness of the funding commitment and ensure that they represent good value for money.
23. The procedure and process for dealing with applications for financial assistance under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 was reviewed in February 2019. All applications are submitted on the approved application form to ensure that all the information required to make a decision is received in a uniform and consistent format. Applications are considered on a quarterly basis with the annual

£3,500 budget apportioned equally each quarter to allow the Community Council to be more focused and equitable when determining financial assistance applications. The emphasis and focus of financial assistance from the Community Council is on providing help to local community groups on an agreed guideline and scale. New local groups will be encouraged to become established to the benefit of the community. All applicants are required to give an undertaking that if successful, they would be prepared to give a report to the Community Council on how the grant monies were spent and what benefit there has been to the community of Acton. The Council is mindful of its spending limits contained within Section 137(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 and does not exceed that limit. It has chosen to use these powers to enter into a Service Level Agreement with Wrexham County Borough Council to continue to provide four School Crossing patrols at Dean Road, Barkers Lane, Box Lane and Borrass Park Infants and Junior Schools on public safety grounds that benefit the whole Community.

24. Since February 2017 the Council has tasked its Youth Committee with monitoring and keeping an overview of the Service Level Agreements with Play Development Team at Wrexham County Borough Council and the Caia Park Partnership to provide firstly for a Detached Youth Work Pilot Project for 8-13 year olds and subsequently an open access youth club for 8-13 and 14-18 year olds at the Acton Community Resource Centre. The Committee meets quarterly and has taken account of the Safeguarding and RESPECT framework it has in place and the experience and qualifications of its Officers to provide the Youth work projects. All the workers are employed and trained by the Caia Park Partnership who will have carried out a risk assessment for the work to be undertaken. The Community Council received and was satisfied with the monitoring reports provided under the SLAs to March 2024.
25. During 2018/19 a three year Memorandum of Agreement with Wrexham County Borough Council was entered into for the provision and management of a Seasonal Ranger for Acton Park to cover the May to September period, working 3 days a week during this period. The main reason being to ensure the Seasonal Park Ranger role at Acton Park continues despite planned budget cuts by Wrexham County Borough Council to its Park Ranger Service. The Community Council's role under this Agreement has developed and it has now agreed to provide finance to support the employment, events and protective clothing costs of the Acton Park Ranger on a permanent basis until 31 March 2026. Wrexham County Borough Council is responsible for the selection and training /induction of the Ranger. The Community Council has made adequate provision within its estimates to meet this expenditure. The money is claimed by Wrexham CBC retrospectively once the costs have been incurred. The Agreement can be terminated at the end of the period or at a time agreed in writing by the partner organisations. The Community Council receives two half year reports on the operation of this Agreement, and together with commendations received from local user groups in the Park is satisfied with the work completed by the Ranger.
26. In 2021, the Community Council entered into a three year Service Level agreement with the Wrexham Citizens Advice Bureau to provide a Community Advice Service within the Acton Community Resource Centre for one half day per week. The Service Level Agreement is subject to performance monitoring and annual reporting and there is a specific Budget provision to enable the funding for this Service Level Agreement with a further commitment that it will continue for a further three years from April 2023. .
27. During 2013/14, a ten year Service Level Agreement was entered into with Wrexham County Borough Council (WCBC) to provide £30,00 pa revenue funding towards the operational management of the Acton Community Resource Centre. The Agreement period rans from April 2013 to March 2023 across ten financial years to provide up to £30,000 per annum from Acton Community Council with an aspiration for the Acton Community Resource Centre to become self-funding as per the Business and Financial Action Plan for the Centre. The Community Council received statistical usage and running costs reports quarterly up to March 2023 when the Agreement was not renewed. The Centre primarily aims to provide a venue for Community Groups to meet and for Acton Community Residents.

The Council has noted that the Resource Centre has been subject to an organizational Review but continues to be managed by Wrexham County Borough Council and the Community Council has three seats secured within the Constitution to sit as of right on the Acton Community Resource Centre's Management Committee.

28. In respect of Community Facilities, the Community Council has agreed to provide funding to Wrexham County Borough Council to enable these facilities to be retained in respect of the four School Crossing Patrols at Dean Road, Barkers Lane, Box Lane and Borrass Park infants and Junior Schools together with the three playgrounds situated in the Acton Community at Acton Park, Aran Road and Ffordd Llewellyn. The Council receives regular reports in respect of the playground inspections, repair and maintenance and has undertaken minor repairs and equipment replacements and painting works as identified in the Annual Inspection reports to minimise risk or as a result of vandalism damage.
29. In accordance with the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 all Council meetings are held on a hybrid basis. All deliberations and decisions at a Council meeting are recorded in the minutes, with those minutes then being reported to the next ordinary meeting for confirmation as a correct record and signing by the Chairman. The minutes are numbered consecutively from the Annual meeting each May. Electors are free to attend any Council meeting, for which public notice is given, and a copy of the minutes is available. If in attendance at a meeting, the public are given a copy of the agenda and associated papers. They are also afforded the rights of inspecting the accounts and associated papers in accordance with statutory requirements at the time of external audit. All agenda, minutes and Public Notices in relation to the availability of Annual Accounts for Inspection are published on the Council's notice board and website: www.actoncommunitycouncil.gov.uk. And comply with the requirements of Sections 55-57 of the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013.
30. In respect of the Council's electronic computer records a real time daily data back-up service has been purchased from Vision ICT as part of the package to provide the Council's website to comply with the provisions of Sections 55-57 of the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013. A standalone Cyber Insurance Policy is also in operation.
31. Consultations whether statutory or optional from other organisations are reported to the Community Council in a timely fashion to enable consideration of a response within the Consultation timeframe. Such organisations can include the National Assembly of Wales, Wrexham CBC, the Audit Commission, the Boundary Commission for Wales, Local Government Ombudsman for Wales and the Post Office.
32. In relation to internal controls, the following comments are made:-
 - 32.1. Financial records are subject to both independent internal and external audit – the Council's Internal Auditor is appointed with a specific and detailed remit as set out in the letter of engagement approved at the Council meeting in February each year; all expenditure is approved by the Council beforehand wherever possible or where appropriate by the Clerk in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair using agreed delegated powers, i.e. August recess arrangements and reported to the Council at the next meeting for record purposes.
 - 32.2. All expenditure, be it accounts for payment, applications for financial assistance or any other items, are properly recorded in the minutes by Voucher number together with the relevant power to make such expenditure. The Clerk advises the Council when Section 137 powers have to be utilised, such as with applications for financial assistance or supporting the costs of School crossing Patrols..
 - 32.3. There are two members of paid staff subject to a contract of employment; however any member claiming the £156 expenses set out in the Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales are paid via the Council's payroll provider. The annual returns for 2022/23 and 2023/24 have been completed by the HM Revenue and Customs deadline as part of the outsourcing agreement with Shropshire Council's Payroll section who act on the Community

Council's behalf in respect of all return liabilities for Tax and National Insurance with HMRC, pension returns with the Clwyd Local Government Pension scheme and the issue of P60.

- 32.4. Generally there is a relatively small amount of VAT to be claimed by the Community Council. This is usually completed on an annual basis by the Clerk as the Responsible Financial Officer at the end of the financial year once the Internal Auditor has completed his audit at the year end. However, if it were to become apparent earlier in the year that there will be a larger than normal amount of VAT to be reclaimed, it will be done as quickly as possible.
- 32.5. There is quarterly reporting together with a detailed timely report submitted to either the November or December meeting of the Community Council setting out the progress of income and expenditure against the current year's budget and indicating the estimated expenditure requirements for the next financial year based on the decisions the Community Council has made and General Fund Balances and Earmarked Reserve requirements. Following consideration of this report, the Council is able to determine the level of its precept for the next financial year and notify its precept requirements to WCBC Finance Department within the time limits of its own Budget process.
- 32.6. The Council has no formal external Performance Measurement requirements but does measure the Clerk's Performance each year through an appraisal by the Chair of the Staffing Committee and the Objectives and outcomes are reported and considered by the Staffing Committee and full Council.
- 32.7. The Community Council has previously applied successfully for grants on behalf of third parties such as the Ffordd Garmonydd Young People's project to extend and improve the Play area at Ffordd Garmonydd and to provide Children Playing warning signs at Overton Way Wrexham. All orders and expenditure of the Grants is accounted for and recorded against the Acton Play Provision in the budget. Additionally Evaluation forms are submitted to Wrexham County Borough Council in order to comply with the Grant Conditions. The Grant Monies whilst being held are ring fenced within the earmarked Acton Play provision budget and any Grant Expenditure is separately identified within the Council's Annual Accounts.
- 32.8. The Community Council has not applied for any loans to the Public Works Loans Board but if any such need arises in the future, a procedure would have to be developed and adopted and incorporated into Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, if appropriate.
- 32.9. All Minutes are properly and sequentially numbered and signed as a correct record by the Chairman at the next subsequent meeting or as soon as possible if the meeting is held remotely.
- 32.10. Any letters, emails or telephone calls received by the Clerk from the public are responded to and if the matters are required to be reported to the Community Council for a decision, a full response is given within seven working days or as soon as practicable thereafter.
- 32.11. All requests for comments and consultation are reported to the Community Council to enable it to determine a response or to the Chair and Vice-Chair in the event of the response time being before the next available meeting and reported to the subsequent meeting of the Community Council.
- 32.12. The Community Council's competent status has not yet been declared. The Clerk undertakes effective CPD and Training by updating through attendance at Conferences but is not currently required to be working towards the recognised Quality Clerk qualification.
- 32.13. The Clerk is responsible for the receipt of any correspondence, arranging circulation to specified Members or the Community Council as appropriate, as soon as practicable, responding to the issues raised on the Council's behalf and ensuring that the enquiry and response are placed in an appropriate paper or electronic file for future record purposes.

- 32.14. The Council at its annual Meeting in November 2020 re-adopted the revised Code of Conduct contained in the Local Government Act 2000 to reflect the amendments in accordance with section 51 of the Local Government Act 2000. (Minute 142.5 March 2015 refers) The Council has signed the appropriate declarations within the Statutory Timetable and also has a Code of Conduct in relation to the Clerk to the Council issued by the National Assembly for Wales. Each time a Member declares an interest, the relevant form is completed and the declaration recorded in the minutes of the meeting where the declaration is made. A summary of each Members annual attendance at meetings and declarations of interest is published on the Community Council's website in accordance with Section 58 of the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013 and the 2013 Act's (Commencement No. 2) Order 2015. The Gifts and Hospitality Register is also updated whenever such matters arise.
- 32.15. The Council has addressed its obligations contained in the Data Protection Act 2018 and reviewed its Policies in respect of Data Protection at its May 2021 Annual Meeting. It keeps progress to electronically archive information under review to ensure it is meeting the requirements of this legislation.
- 32.16. The Council considers in full the reports from its Internal Auditor and responds to the action issues and recommendations highlighted in it. The last report overall was a clean report with recommendations that were addressed at the June 2023 meeting of the Council. The Community Council and its Internal Auditor appears to be satisfied that current arrangements for Internal Audit work well with a good critical friend dialogue.
- 32.17. Weaknesses in the Council's risk assessment were identified as a result of the Covid 19 Lock Down and the total reliance purely on the delegations contained in the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. The Council should at the earliest opportunity agree a Scheme of Delegation and Business Continuity arrangements in the light of the COvid19 crisis. It is important that the Council can demonstrate that it has taken the appropriate steps to mitigate such risk and properly delegate urgent matters to enable the Council to act intra vires and ensure business continuity that the Council must act as a corporate entity and not delegate any powers to individual Councillors.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- i) that consideration of this report and its recommendations as contained in Appendix 3 be accepted as the formal Risk Assessment for 2023 and 2024***
- ii) that in relation to the key risks, these be identified as relating to the Community Council's assets, bank accounts, internal financial controls and insurance cover for statutory and other purposes;***
- iii) The arrangements highlighted in paragraph 8.1 to 8.5 and paragraph 32.1 to 32.17 in Appendix 3 be accepted as having taken all the appropriate steps to minimise risks in conjunction with the documented Internal Financial Controls subject to agreeing a Scheme of Delegation and Business Continuity arrangements.***
- iv) The Council continue to make arrangements for formal checks on new supplier's credentials via Companies House to be included as a requirement to be undertaken as part of the risk assessment prior to any new suppliers payments being authorised to mitigate risk***

Community Council: Acton

Community Agent Name: Mandy

| | | | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Total |
|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| 1 CLIENTS PROFILE: NEW REFERRALS & OPEN CASES | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.1 | Number of clients receiving support | <i>Number of individuals still receiving support that were recorded in previous month/s</i> | 5 | 11 | 14 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 37 |
| 1.2 | Number of new people accessing the service | <i>The number of individuals who access the project for the first time.</i> | 14 | 5 | 4 | 12 | 5 | 16 | 62 |
| 1.3 | Number of people re-referring to the service | <i>The number of individuals that have previously accessed the service but have asked for further support</i> | | | | 7 | 5 | 3 | 15 |
| 1.4 | Age Profile <i>Please indicate the number of NEW referrals received during the month from each age</i> | Over 50 | 14 | 4 | 4 | 22 | 12 | 21 | 83 |
| | | Under 50 | | 1 | | 0 | | | 1 |
| 1.5 | Ethnicity <i>Please indicate the number of NEW referrals received during the month. Please select one</i> | White (Welsh, English, Scottish, Northern Irish or British) | 14 | 5 | 4 | 22 | 12 | 21 | 84 |
| | | Irish | | | | | | | 0 |
| | | Gypsy or Irish Traveller | | | | | | | 0 |
| | | Roma | | | | | | | 0 |
| | | Any other White background | | | | | | | 0 |
| | | Asian - Indian | | | | | | | 0 |
| | | Asian - Pakistani | | | | | | | 0 |
| | | Asian - Bangladeshi | | | | | | | 0 |
| | | Asian - Chinese | | | | | | | 0 |
| | | Asia - any other Asian background | | | | | | | 0 |
| Black - Caribbean | | | | | | | | 0 | |

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|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| option only | Black - African | | | | | | | 0 |
| | Black - any other Black, Black British, or Caribbean background | | | | | | | 0 |
| | Mixed - White and Black Caribbean | | | | | | | 0 |
| | Mixed - White and Black African | | | | | | | 0 |
| | Mixed - White and Asian | | | | | | | 0 |
| | Any other Mixed or multiple ethnic background | | | | | | | 0 |
| | Arab | | | | | | | 0 |
| | Any other ethnicity please describe: | | | | | | | 0 |
| | Prefer not to say | | | | | | | 0 |
| 1.6 Referral Source Please indicate the <u>number</u> of referrals received during the month from each referral source | Self Referral | 7 | | 2 | 9 | 8 | 5 | 32 |
| | Neighbour / Friend | | | | 3 | 1 | 2 | 7 |
| | Age Cymru | | | | | | | 0 |
| | AVOW | 1 | | | 2 | | | 3 |
| | Citizen Advice | | | | | | | 0 |
| | Community Council | | | | | | 2 | 2 |
| | Extra Care | | | | | | | 0 |
| | Family | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 9 |
| | Fire Service | | | | | | | 0 |
| | Health - GP/ District Nurse | | | | | | | 0 |
| | Health - Hospital | | | | | | 3 | 4 |
| | Health - Other <i>Please detail</i> | | | | | | | 0 |
| | Housing- Association | | | | | | | 0 |

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|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|--|---|----|
| | SOURCE | Housing - WCBC | | | | | | | | 0 |
| | | NEWCIS | | | | | | | | 0 |
| | | North Wales Autistic Society | | | | | | | | 0 |
| | | Police | | | | | | | | 0 |
| | | Social Care - Community Wellbeing Team | | 1 | | | | | | 1 |
| | | Social Care - Disability Team | | | | | | | | 0 |
| | | Social Care - Older Persons Team | | | | 3 | 1 | | 3 | 9 |
| | | Social Care - OT | | | | | | | 1 | 1 |
| | | Well-Being Hub | | | | | | | 1 | 2 |
| | | Social Prescribers | | 1 | | 2 | | | 1 | 4 |
| | | Other - <i>Please detail</i> Rainbow, Alzheimers Org | 5 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | 10 |
| 1.7 | Unpaid Carer <i>Please indicate the number of referrals received during the month from each</i> | Unpaid Carer | 1 | | | 1 | 1 | | | 3 |
| | | Cared For | | | | | | | | 0 |
| | | Both | | | | | | | | 0 |
| 1.8 | Housing <i>Please indicate the number of referrals received during the month from each</i> | Owner | | | | | | | | 0 |
| | | Family Owned | | | | | | | | 0 |
| | | Private rented | | | | | | | | 0 |
| | | Council Rented | | | | | | | | 0 |
| | | Residential / Sheltered / Supported Living | | | | | | | | 0 |
| | | Homeless | | | | | | | | 0 |
| | | Not Recorded | | | | | | | | 0 |
| 2. CLIENT PROFILE: CLOSED REFERRALS | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 1-6 Days | | | | 6 | 2 | | 2 | 10 |
| | | 1 Week | | | 2 | 5 | 3 | | | 10 |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| | 30001C | Housing - WCBC | | | | | | | | 0 |
| | | NEWCIS | | | | | | | | 0 |
| | | North Wales Autistic Society | | | | | | | | 0 |
| | | Police | | | | | | | | 0 |
| | | Social Care - Community Wellbeing Team | | 1 | | | | | | 1 |
| | | Social Care - Disability Team | | | | | | | | 0 |
| | | Social Care - Older Persons Team | | | | 3 | 1 | 3 | | 9 |
| | | Social Care - OT | | | | | | 1 | | 1 |
| | | Well-Being Hub | | | | | | 1 | | 2 |
| | | Social Prescribers | | 1 | | 2 | | 1 | | 4 |
| | | Other - <i>Please detail</i> Rainbow, Alzheimers Org | | 5 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | 10 |
| 1.7 | Unpaid Carer <i>Please indicate the number of referrals received during the month from each</i> | Unpaid Carer | | 1 | | | 1 | 1 | | 3 |
| | | Cared For | | | | | | | | 0 |
| | | Both | | | | | | | | 0 |
| 1.8 | Housing <i>Please indicate the number of referrals received during the month from each</i> | Owner | | | | | | | | 0 |
| | | Family Owned | | | | | | | | 0 |
| | | Private rented | | | | | | | | 0 |
| | | Council Rented | | | | | | | | 0 |
| | | Residential / Sheltered / Supported Living | | | | | | | | 0 |
| | | Homeless | | | | | | | | 0 |
| | | Not Recorded | | | | | | | | 0 |
| 2. CLIENT PROFILE: CLOSED REFERRALS | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 1-6 Days | | | | | 6 | 2 | 2 | 10 |
| | | 1 Week | | | | 2 | 5 | 3 | | 10 |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|
| 2.1 | How long the client was working with Community Agent before closed | 2 Weeks | | | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 10 |
| | | 3 Weeks | 1 | | | 3 | 2 | | 6 |
| | | 4 weeks | | | 1 | 2 | | | 3 |
| | | 4-8 Weeks | | | | 3 | 2 | | 5 |
| | | 8-12 Weeks | | | | | | | 0 |
| | | 13+ weeks <i>Please detail reason</i> | | | | | | | |
| 2.2 | Number of people feeling less isolated | <i>The number of individuals who report feeling less isolated after receiving support from the project.</i> | 1 | | 5 | 16 | 6 | 8 | 40 |
| 2.3 | Number of people satisfied with the information provided | <i>The number of individuals who report being satisfied with the information they received from the project</i> | 1 | | 5 | 22 | 10 | 8 | 52 |
| 2.4 | Number of people achieving personal outcomes | <i>The number of individuals who have achieved personal outcomes as a result of the project. E.g Attending Community Groups, Accessed Service etc</i> | 1 | | 5 | 12 | 8 | 6 | 36 |
| 3. CLOSED REFERRALS: WHO AGEING WELL STATUS | | | | | | | | | |
| 3.1 | World Health Organisation Outcomes <i>Please indicate the number of clients who have reported an improvement in each of these</i> | Number feeling safe and secure | 1 | 2 | 5 | 13 | 9 | 4 | 34 |
| | | Number making more meaningful use of time | 1 | 2 | 3 | 9 | 6 | 3 | 24 |
| | | Number improved ability to manage paperwork / digital skills | | | | 3 | 6 | 2 | 11 |
| | | Number improved ability to manage day to day activities | 1 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 3 | 16 |
| | | Number increased satisfaction with home environment | | | | 7 | 3 | 2 | 12 |
| | | Number improved awareness to access further services | | 2 | | 18 | 9 | 4 | 33 |
| | | Number improved social networks and friendships | 1 | | | 9 | 8 | 4 | 22 |
| | | Number improved ability to cope in caring role | 1 | | | 3 | 1 | 4 | 9 |
| | | Number improved health management and physical fitness | 1 | | | 12 | 5 | 2 | 20 |
| 4. OTHER | | | | | | | | | |
| 4.1 | Hours worked during month | <i>If you have sickness or annual leave during the month please indicate this</i> | 74 | 70 | 70 | 86 | 76 | 59 | 435 |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|---|----|----|----|----|---|----|
| 4.2 | Number of Community Groups Attended | Community Groups | 7 | 8 | 7 | 12 | 8 | 3 | 51 |
| | | Groups you have set up | | | | | 6 | 4 | 10 |
| | | 1:1 i.e face to face / home visits etc | 4 | 13 | 17 | 22 | 12 | 8 | 82 |
| | | Drop in Sessions | | 1 | | 2 | | 2 | 5 |
| | | Other: <i>Please detail</i> | | | | | | | 0 |
| 4.3 | Funding Applied For | Community Inclusion Grant | | | | | | | 0 |
| | | Loneliness and Isolation Fund (AVOW) | | | | | | | 0 |
| | | Other: <i>Please detail</i> | | | | | | | 0 |

| Organisation | Details | Notes |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| CONSULTATIONS: Members are requested to submit any comments they may wish to make on the undermentioned Consultations | | |
| 1. One Voice Wales | Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill: email dated 21 March 2024 with details of a consultation on the Electoral Candidate Lists Bill. Responses are invited by 16.00 on Friday 12 April 2024. | |
| 2. North Wales Fire and Rescue Service | Launch of public consultation on continuing to prevent and respond to emergencies: email dated 26 March with links to this public consultation. To take part, please visit www.northwalesfire.gov.wales to complete the questionnaire and to access all the information needed in order to respond to the questions. Direct link here. | |
| 3. J10 Planning Ltd | Cefn Road: Erlas Park - Planning Consultation: email dated 5 April 2024 inviting Members to comment on the proposed development via this link http://www.erlasparkconsultation.co.uk/ (See Agenda Item 13.1) | |
| 4. Wrexham CBC | Consultation of review of allocations policy: email dated 9 April inviting comments via this link https://www.yourvoicewrexham.com/survey/2067 on proposed changes to the Allocations Policy. Closing date is 31 May 2024 | |
| CORRESPONDENCE | | |
| 1. One Voice Wales | 1. 2024 - MARCH, APRIL, MAY & JUNE 2024 TRAINING DATES: email dated 21 March 2024 with details of the latest training sessions being held. | |
| 2. Urdd Cymru | The Urdd's Fund for All: email dated 21 March 2024 with information on 300 free places at the Urdd's summer camps for children and young people in Wales. | |
| 3. Wrexham CBC | <p>1. Notice of Election - Police and Crime Commissioner Election - Thursday 2 May 2024: email dated 22 March 2024 with the Notice of the forthcoming Police and Crime Commissioner election.</p> <p>2. 80th Anniversary of D-Day – 06.06.2024: email dated 4 April 2024 inviting Members to attend a Church Service, together with the Mayor, Councillors and members of the local Armed Forces Community, to be held at St Giles Church, Wrexham at 12.30 p.m.</p> | |
| 4. Office of Sarah Atherton MP | Community Ownership Fund - Updated Prospectus published for Application Round Four: email dated 25 March 2024 with details of this funding. | |