

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

The Minutes of the proceedings of the hybrid meeting of the General Purposes Committee, held on Monday the 17th June, 2024.

PRESENT: Councillor M. Buckley (in the Chair).

Councillors: D. Challenger, P. Cunningham, R. Davies, C. Griffiths, E. Jones, M. Whittaker and J. Stoneley.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors: N. Davies, B. Goldsborough, L. Leigh, M. Moore, M. Perfect and I. Roberts.

IN ATTENDANCE: L. Wood, Town Clerk and N. Thornton, Support Officer.

19. TO ELECT A CHAIRMAN FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2024/25

RESOLVED: That Councillor N. Davies was elected as Chairman of the General Purposes Committee for the Municipal Year 2024/25.

20. TO ELECT A VICE CHAIRMAN FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2024/25

RESOLVED: That Councillor M. Buckley was elected as Vice Chairman of the General Purposes Committee for the Municipal Year 2024/25.

21. DECLARATION OF INTEREST – MEMBERS CODE OF CONDUCT

There were no declarations of interests made.

22. PUBLIC ENQUIRY ITEM

There were no public enquiry items.

23. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 15th April 2024 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

24. FLINT FESTIVAL & TOWN EVENTS

Councillor M. Buckley reminded Councillors that this Saturday, 22nd June is Flint Pride and all are welcome to attend.

Councillor M. Buckley reported that the Pride event has been fully funded by donations. No money from the Town Council budget has been used for this event.

RESOLVED: That the report was noted.

25. TRANSPORT BRIEFING

On behalf of Councillor N. Davies, the Clerk reported that Mr. N. Smith, Regional Growth Manager, Avanti was questioned about the unacceptable number of delays and cancellations of trains on the North Coast line. Mr N. Smith said Avanti are working hard to improve their service and the main reasons for cancellations are train crew availability.

Mr. N. Smith said the North Wales line is the priority for Avanti and Flint station will continue to remain an important stop on their schedule. The new Hitachi trains will be introduced from the beginning of June.

Councillor M. Whittaker raised concerns about issues impacting business travellers and visitors and proposed that Councillor N. Davies requests evidence from Mr. N. Smith showing that Flint is a priority and to seek assurances regarding these matters.

RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk will ask Councillor N. Davies to contact Mr. N. Smith, Regional Growth Manager, Avanti and raise these questions and report back to Council.

26. PLAYGROUND COMMUNICATION BOARDS

The Council considered an email from Specialist Speech and Language Therapist, Betsi Cadwaladr regarding the offer of a playground communication board to place in a playground in the Flint area.

A number of play areas were considered, and it was agreed that we would accept a communication board for Cornist Park play area.

Councillor R. Davies proposed that we ask the cost to purchase additional boards for the other play areas in Flint.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk will confirm the Council will accept the offer of a playground communication board for the Cornist Play area and request costs for additional boards for the other play areas in Flint.

27. SAFETY OF LITHIUM-ION BATTERIES, E-BIKES AND SCOOTERS

The Council considered an email from Mr. R. Bailey, Researcher for Lord Foster to support the campaign to improve the safety of lithium batteries, used in e-bike and e-scooters and their disposal.

Council agreed to support this campaign.

RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk will write to Mr. R. Bailey, Researcher for Lord Foster to confirm the support of the Council with this campaign.

28. CONSULTATION ON REVIEWING THE COUNCIL TAX PREMIUM SCHEME FOR LONG TERM EMPTY PROPERTIES AND SECOND HOMES IN FLINTSHIRE

The Council considered the Council Tax consultation from Flintshire County Council.

Councillor P. Cunningham proposed that the Town Council should complete the survey collectively, however, also allowing individual Councillors the option to complete it separately if they wish.

Councillor M. Buckley suggested Councillors should return the complete survey to the Town Clerk, who can then collate the information before sending a completed survey to Flintshire County Council.

RESOLVED: That the Council will complete the survey collectively, while allowing individual Councillors the option to complete it separately if they wish.

29. CLOSURE OF TSB BANK

Councillor M. Buckley reported that TSB announced the closure of 35 branches nationwide, this includes Flint, the only remaining bank in the Town. The proposal by TSB will see the branch closed in May 2025.

The Labour Group of Councillors have started a petition in town and have so far collected over 270 signatures calling on the bank to rethink their decision.

Councillor M. Buckley proposed that the Town Council writes to the TSB Bank and expresses their disappointment at the decision to close the last remaining bank branch in the Town and request they reverse this decision and also write to Link to explore the option of opening a banking hub in Flint.

RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk will write to the TSB Bank to express the disappointment at TSB Bank's decision to close the Flint branch and request that they reconsider and reverse the decision to close the branch and to write to Link to explore the option of opening a banking hub in Flint.

30. WAR MEMORIAL

Councillor V. Perfect proposed that the War Memorial on the junction of Aber Road is cleaned and restored, as it is important to preserve the memorial as a mark of respect for the fallen soldiers. Councillors agreed to obtain a quotation for the cleaning of this Memorial.

The Clerk reminded Councillors that following a previous request for the cleaning and restoration of the War Memorials at Trelawny Square, we had received a quotation from Blackwells and had since applied for a grant via War Memorial Trust.

RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk will obtain a quotation for the cleaning the Aber Road War Memorial and report back to Council.

31. WATER FOUNTAIN

Councillor M. Buckley reported that the Fountain has not been operational this year and asked the Clerk to provide an explanation for the issue and for the Council to discuss a way forward.

The Clerk explained that this had been an ongoing issue and she has been in discussions

with both Flintshire County Council and a local electrical company, who in 2022 fitted a new pump. However, due to a shallow reservoir and the water evaporating, the pump had again burnt out.

The Clerk explained that a local company conducted a site visit and determined that to repair the fountain, the top section would need to be reconfigured. The estimated cost for this repair is approximately £1,500 - £2,000.

Councillor P. Cunningham proposed that the Council considers this matter during the budget planning for 2025/26 and to leave the fountain turned off for this year.

RESOLVED: That the Council agreed to defer the repair of the fountain until the budget for 2025/26 is set. The fountain will remain turned off until further notice.

32. GRASS CUTTING

Councillor C. Griffiths proposed that the Council writes to Flintshire Streetscene regarding the Pen Goch playing field. It is noted that the field is overgrown, has not been cut for two months, and the perimeter has yet to be strimmed.

Councillor D. Challenger proposed that a small area of the Pen Goch playing field be left as a nature area for bees and insects.

RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk will write to Flintshire Streetscene requesting action to cut the overgrown grass and strim the perimeter of the Pen Goch playing field however, leaving a small area of the Pen Goch playing field be left as a nature area.

Date of Council Meeting	Monday 17 th June 2024
..... Chair	